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A

HISTORY

OF THE

POLITICAL LIFE

OF THE

RIGHT HONOURABLE

WILLIAM PITT,

INCLUDING SOME ACCOUNT OF

THE TIMES IN WHICH HE LIVED.

By JOHN GIFFORD, Esq.

IN SIX VOLUMES.

NEC SIBI, SED TOTI GENITUM SE CREDERE MUNDO

LUCAN.

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tion—He excites public tumults—The French General Duphot killed in one of them—Joseph leaves Rome—The Pope offers to avert the vengeance of France by any concessions which the Directory may dictate—Imprecates the divine assistance, by public processions, penance, and prayer—Joseph Buonaparté's cowardly abuse of the Pope—Berthier leads a French army to Rome—Engages to respect the government, and to protect property—Declares his sole object to be the punishment of the persons who killed Duphot—The Pope forbids his subjects to resist the French—The French enter Rome without opposition—They destroy the papal government, and erect a "*Roman Republic*," founded on the *Sovereignty of the People*—The Pope sent from Rome—The Vatican stripped—A general plunder takes place—Seven Consuls appointed—The inhabitants are pillaged and impoverished—Dreadful effects of this Revolution described by a Republican author—Horrible proposition made by a member of the new Jacobin Club at Rome—Priests made responsible for the peace of their districts—The French Directory again change the constitution of the Batavian Republic—Secure the citadel of Turin, and make the King of Sardinia a prisoner in his capital—An expedition sails from Toulon under the command of Buonaparté—Malta surrendered to the French by the treachery of the Knights—A British squadron, under Admiral Nelson, enters the Mediterranean in pursuit of the French—Arrives at Alexandria before them—Sails to Sicily—French land at Alexandria and take the city by storm—Nelson returns to Egypt—Battle of the Nile—Destruction of the French Fleet—Buonaparté marches to Cairo—Defeats the Mamelukes—Takes Cairo—His communication with Europe cut off—British expedition to Ostend—The troops destroy the sluices of the canal of Bruges—Are surrounded and taken by the French.

THE

POLITICAL LIFE OF MR. PITT.

CHAPTER XXXV.

Examination of the new Principle advanced by the French Government in their Note to Mr. Wickham---Supposed motives which influenced Mr. Pitt in opening another negotiation with the French for Peace---The Danish Minister, at Paris, applies to the Directory for a passport for a British Envoy---Insolent conduct of the Directory ---Direct application to the French Minister, by Lord Grenville, for passports---Lord Malmesbury repairs to Paris---Proposes the principle of a Treaty---Objected to by the Directory, who wish to engage him in a negotiation for a separate Peace---Futility of the objection exposed by Lord Malmesbury, who insists on treating for Great Britain and her Allies---Equivocation of the French Government---After great delay they admit the proposed principle---British Memorial containing the demand of the restitution of the Netherlands to Austria, and offering to restore all the conquests made by England upon France ---Curious admission of M. Delacroix --- Peremptory demand of the British *ultimatum* by the French---Rejected by Lord Malmesbury, as premature and unprecedented, and as calculated to shut the door against all negotiation---His Lordship declares his readiness to

discuss the terms which he has himself proposed, or any others which the Directory might propose---The Directory refuse to propose any terms, and order the British Envoy to leave Paris in eight and forty hours --- Observations on the conduct of the Directory---Their motives and object explained---Meeting of the new Parliament---Address opposed in the House of Lords by Earl Fitzwilliam, on the ground that it was improper for Ministers to treat with France until her hereditary Monarchy was restored --- He proposes an amendment, which is negatived without a division---He enters a protest, declaratory of his principles, and of his views of the subject --- Mr. Fox congratulates the Minister on the negotiation; and promises universal support to the war if the French should refuse just and reasonable terms of Peace---Mr. Pitt proposes measures for the better defence of the Country---Supplementary Militia---Militia in Scotland proposed by Mr. Dundas---Adopted by the Legislature---The budget---The Loyalty Loan---Mr. Pitt informs the House of certain sums transmitted to the Emperor since the dissolution of the last Parliament---no notice taken of this communication by Mr. Grey --- It is strongly attacked by Mr. Fox, who calls for the impeachment of the Minister, and opposes the supplies---Accuses Mr. Pitt of a gross breach of the Constitution---Maintains, that if Mr. Pitt's doctrine be constitutional, the British Constitution is a vile and detestable Constitution---Mr. Pitt's answer---He cautions the House against believing in the sincerity of Mr. Fox's alarm for the Constitution---Assures them that Mr. Fox had *very often* made a stand behind its *last* dike---Represents this fatal attack on the Constitution, as having escaped the notice of Mr. Grey, and as having proved insufficient to interrupt, or disturb, his financial calculations---Intreats Mr. Fox will not lose a moment in bringing forward his

charge; and that he will vent his rage upon him, and not extend it to his country---Mr. Fox's reply---Farther debate on the subject---Moves that the Ministers have betrayed their trust, and violated the constitutional privileges of the House---Motion seconded by Alderman Combe---Remarks on Mr. Combe's ignorance of the Duty of a Representative---Mr. Pitt's defence---He lays down the general principle of Ministerial responsibility---Applies it to the point in question---Justifies his conduct, by the necessity of the case, and by the constant usage of successive administrations, since the Revolution---Shews, that if the charge of violating the Constitution had been preferred against his Opponents, it would have had, at least, more probable grounds to support it---Reflections on the conduct of Mr Pitt on this occasion---Mr. Bragge moves an amendment to Mr. Fox's motion, approving the conduct of the Minister in the particular instance, but disclaiming it *as a precedent*---Mr. Sheridan's speech---His inaccuracy and misrepresentations exposed---A mere effusion of Democracy---Mr. Wilberforce intreats Mr. Sheridan not to become the guardian of *his* morals---Mr. Fox replies---The amendment carried by 285 votes against 81---King's message on the rupture of the negotiation at Paris---Mr. Pitt's speech---He moves an Address to the Throne---Opposed by Mr. Erskine, who, prevented by sudden indisposition from *delivering* his speech, resolves to *print* it---Remarks on it---Violent speech of Mr. Fox, who again pleads the cause of France, and disregards the pledge of support which he had recently given---Declares no peace can be concluded without a change of system and of Ministers---Moves an Amendment---Character of that Amendment---Rejected by 212 votes against 37---List of the Minority---Similar discussion in the House of Lords---Lord Fitzwilliam's Speech---Lord Spencer's answer---Address carried---Lord Fitzwilliam's amendment negatived---His protest---Parliament adjourned.

[1796-1797.] After the full and explicit avowal, on the part of the French Directory, of a determination not even to enter upon a negotiation for peace, without the previous admission, by the British Cabinet, of a principle, subversive of the settled maxims of public law, destructive of the rights of independent States, and asserting the paramount authority of the French Republic over every established government, and of her legislative decrees over all the codes and constitutions of Europe;—after the opposition of so formidable an obstacle to her pacific overtures, England, in her better days, would have disdained again to solicit a peace, without the intervention of any new circumstance, without any perceptible change in the disposition or councils of France, from implacable enemies, who consulted neither the interests nor the happiness of the country, over which they had, most unexpectedly, been called to rule, and who knew not how to conduct themselves with propriety or decency, to other Sovereign powers.

Even Mr. Fox could not but condemn, as unjust, the revolutionary principle asserted by the Directory, in their answer to Mr. Wickham's note; although he chose to consider it as a mere pretext, suited to the particular occasion, and not meant to be adopted as a rule of

action. All laws, which relate to matters of positive institution, are obligatory on those only by whose authority, either expressed or implied, they are enacted. They derive their sole sanction and efficacy from the real or supposed assent of those who are immediately subject to their operation, which is, consequently, confined to the limits of the state in which they originate. It is this extent of jurisdiction which constitutes the principal difference between municipal and public law. Destined, as mankind are, for social purposes, and scattered, as they are, over the whole surface of the globe, they necessarily form themselves into separate and independent nations, which, however, from the same principle by which men are led to congregate in large bodies, preserve, in different degrees, a mutual intercourse. For the regulation of this intercourse, which corresponds exactly to the intercourse which subsists between individuals, a rule of law is equally necessary. But, as no law can be binding except it be acknowledged by those whom it is meant to affect; and as no independent community will acknowledge the rules which another may prescribe, the law of nations, of necessity, consists of the dictates of natural reason, and the stipulations of mutual Convention. From this difference between the extent

of operation, which the law of nations, and municipal law, respectively possess, and from the review of the principle on which the difference is founded, it will appear, that the private regulations of a particular community cannot have any force, or applicability, in a transaction between that and any other community. To make such an application, is to confound every principle by which laws are made, and from which they derive their sanction. It is the assumption of a prerogative of dispensing, by the legislative authority of one nation, with the interests and engagements of other States; of controlling their independence, and of limiting their rights.

But if this doctrine be more fixed in its principle, more free from objection, and more strong in its application, in one case than in another, it is in that of a negotiation for peace between two belligerent States. In such case, whatever may be the fundamental laws of each nation, the terms of adjustment are always regulated by their relative force, and their relative necessity. The quantum of concession which either may be induced to make, is measured by the extent of its remaining power, and the pressure of its increasing distresses. It is not only impertinent, and absurd in the highest degree, in reference to its adversary, to advance

an internal regulation as an impediment to the conditions which the other, on a view of its comparative situation, may be entitled to exact; but the public functionary of a state is, in fact, always considered, from reasons of general policy, as possessing, on such a view, the power of consenting to those conditions, even though they should be contrary to the directions of its municipal law.*

These principles are so plain and common, and have been acquiesced in so long by all civilized States, that any explanation of them would be unnecessary for any other purpose than that of shewing, that the Executive Directory acted in open contradiction to them all, when they declared to Mr. Wickham, that the Constitutional Act did not permit them to consent to any alienation of that which, according to the existing law, constituted the territory of the Republic. Now, the Constitutional Act of France, had it been framed antecedently to the commencement of hostilities, could not have been binding upon foreign powers, and, therefore, could not be brought forward as a valid instrument applicable to them. But, in fact, it was enacted during the war, at a time when some parts of the territory of the Republic

* Vattel. B. 1. S. 262.

were in the hands of her enemies, and when that portion of territory, which she had conquered from them, and had thought proper, by the law, in question, to call an integral part of France, was only her's by the chance of war, of which she was liable to be dispossessed by the same means. Any provision of this nature was, therefore, plainly made in her own wrong, as far as she meant to insist on its admission, as a preliminary to negotiation;—besides, this law, the violation of which was stated to be beyond the prerogative of the Directory, was itself a direct violation of the law of nations. The right of conquest is only inchoate,* and receives completion solely from the definitive articles of a treaty of peace. The Republic, therefore, had no legitimate power to appropriate to herself the countries which her armies occupied. She possessed over them only a transitory dominion, which no partial act of her own could make permanent and lawful.†

It was the first time that any belligerent power had the audacity to propose, as an indispensible preliminary to negotiation, that she

* Vattel, B. 3, S. 197.

† Remarks on the Conduct of the respective Governments of Great Britain and France, on the late negotiations for peace, 1797. P. 14.

should retain every conquest which she had made herself, and that every one of her possessions, which had been taken by her enemy, should be restored. A simple avowal of such monstrous and exorbitant ambition would have been sufficient, without further aggravation, to defeat all reasonable hopes of accommodation. But the pretension was so urged as even to preclude all discussion. It was not one which admitted of modification by reasoning and expostulation. It was, at once, definitive in its nature; no proposal, which was contrary to it, would be listened to; the previous concession of it was the *sine quâ non* of negotiation. —" A previous concession, which," says a contemporary writer, with the spirit of a genuine Englishman, " I know not whether we should have been inclined to make, if the Gauls had been in our capital, and the tri-coloured flag flying on the Tower; and I am sure, if it had been made at the juncture alluded to, we should have deserved the same insult with which their ancestors, on one occasion, reproached the ancient Romans,—*Auditaque intoleranda Romanis vox, væ victis esse.*"

This outrageous pretension was justly considered, by the Minister, as an insurmountable bar to peace; and, therefore, his Majesty had declared, that, while such dispositions were

persisted in, nothing was left for him, but to prosecute the war. Not the smallest indication of a change in this disposition had appeared since; yet Mr. Pitt, anxious, if possible, to silence the clamours for peace, which had been artfully excited; and, to satisfy the Opposition, who had incessantly shifted their ground; and, when the measures which they had declared would be satisfactory to them, had been adopted, found some reason or other for dissatisfaction;—and willing, also, to put the French-Rulers so completely in the wrong as to render it impossible for any Englishman again to plead their cause, and to justify their conduct, resolved to make a direct proposal for peace.—For this purpose, an application was made to the Directory, through the Danish Minister, at Paris, for passports for a person of confidence, whom his Majesty would send to Paris, with a commission, to discuss, with the government there, all the means most proper to put an end to the war, by just, honourable, and permanent conditions of peace. This note was dated on the sixth of September; and Mr. Koenemann, the Danish Charge D'Affaires, delivered it to Mr. Delacroix, the French Minister for foreign affairs, who promised that an answer should be sent after it had been submitted to the consideration of the government. But, having

waited three days, without receiving any answer, Mr. Koenemann renewed his application to Delacroix, who informed him, that the Directory would allow him to give only a verbal answer, to this effect,—that they would not, for the future, receive, or answer, any overtures, or confidential papers, transmitted through any intermediate channel, from the enemies of the Republic; but that, if they would send persons furnished with full powers, and official papers, these might, upon the frontiers, demand the passports necessary for proceeding to Paris.

Nothing could be more repulsive than this reply; nor more fully indicative of the hostile disposition of the French government. The Minister, however, was not to be deterred by such difficulties, from extorting the desired explanation. Lord Grenville, therefore, on the twenty-seventh of September, wrote directly to Delacroix, observing, that, in his previous application, the Court of London had expressly declared, that a person should be commissioned to discuss, with the French government, all the means, the most proper for conducing to the re-establishment of peace. The King, still persevering in the same sentiments which he had already so unequivocally declared, would not leave to his enemies the smallest pretext for

eluding a discussion, the result of which would necessarily serve either to produce the happiness of many nations, or, at least, to render evident the views and dispositions of those who opposed themselves to it. It was, therefore, declared, that, as soon as the Executive Directory should transmit passports, the King would send a person to Paris, furnished with full powers, and official instructions, to negotiate, with the French government, on the means of restoring general tranquillity to Europe. The Directory, aware that the refusal of passports would render them extremely unpopular, ordered Delacroix to transmit them; and Lord Malmesbury, the appointed Minister, accordingly repaired to Paris. In a short memorial, presented to Delacroix, on the 24th of October, his Lordship stated the principle on which it was proposed to treat, namely, by offering compensation to France, by proportionable restitutions, for those arrangements to which she would be called upon to consent, in order to satisfy the just demands of the King's allies, and to preserve the political balance of Europe.

This drew forth an angry communication from the Directory, in their usual style of republican rudeness, and indecent insinuation, the object of which was to enforce an observance of their settled policy, by persuading

Great Britain to treat for herself alone, for the terms of a *separate* peace. In regard to the proposed principle, they observed, that "such a principle, presented in a vague and insulated manner, could not serve as a basis of negotiation." They further demanded *specific propositions* to be made to them! Lord Malmesbury, in his reply, remarked, that, with regard to the offensive and injurious insinuations thrown out by the Directory, and which were only calculated to put new obstacles in the way of that accommodation which the French government professed to desire, the King deemed it far beneath his dignity to permit an answer to be made to them, on his part, in any manner whatsoever. His Lordship then exposed the futility of the objections started by the Directory to the proposed mode of negotiation,—declared the firm resolution of his Court never to abandon its allies,—and demanded a frank, and precise, explanation of the intentions of the Directory, as to the admission of the principle of negotiation. In answer, the British Minister was called upon, without, however, any admission of the principle, "to point out, without the smallest delay, and expressly, the objects of reciprocal compensation," meant to be proposed. This demand was, very properly, rejected, on the ground of

its perfect inutility before the formal acceptance of the principle advanced, or the proposal, by the Directory, of some other principle, which might serve as the basis of a negotiation for a general peace. No satisfaction, however, could be obtained, on this point, from the Directory, until a period of fifteen days had elapsed, when, after much equivocation and evasion, Delacroix was instructed to declare, (in direct contradiction to the truth) that the answers, before given, contained an acknowledgment of the principle of compensation;* but, in order to remove all doubt, on that subject, he was now authorized to make a positive and formal declaration of that acknowledgment.

The preliminary principle being, at length, agreed upon, Lord Malmesbury, on the 17th of December, delivered, to Delacroix, a memorial, containing the specific proposals of the British Court.—These were, the restitution of all the Imperial dominions, to the Emperor, as they stood before the war; a peace with the Germanic Empire, negotiated with the Emperor, as its lawful head; and the evacuation of Italy, by the French troops, with the restoration of

* A reference to the two papers here alluded to, of the 5th and 25th Brumaire, will suffice to prove, that they do not contain any thing to justify this assertion of the Directory.

its former governments; and an engagement never to interfere in its internal concerns. In return for these concessions, on the part of France, Great Britain offered to restore all the places which she had taken from France, during the war, and to replace every thing between the two countries on the same footing on which it stood previous to the commencement of hostilities. It was also stated, that, if the Directory should object to these proposals, the British Court would be glad to receive any counter-project which they might think proper to present. In a long conference between the two Ministers, which followed the delivery of this paper, Delacroix plainly shewed that the Directory would never submit to the restitution of the Austrian Netherlands; and he wished to extort Lord Malmesbury's assent to a proposition for indemnifying the Emperor for the loss of them, by giving to him the territories of some of the German Princes, which were not even in possession of the French armies; but over which the Directory asserted as absolute a right of disposal as if they had been obtained by conquest, or acquired by the less questionable mode of voluntary surrender. To a proposal so completely revolutionary, it was not, of course, thought proper to give any serious answer. The French government

argued, too, the necessity of some addition to the territory of France, in order to counterbalance that increased strength which Austria, Russia, and Prussia, had acquired by the recent partition of Poland; but this argument was ingeniously repelled by Lord Malmesbury, by the admission of Delacroix, in a former conference, that France had acquired more vigour and power than it possessed under the Monarchy, from the change in her political system; his expression was,—"*We are no longer in the decrepitude of Monarchical France, but in the full strength of a youthful Republic.*" Thus foiled with his own weapons, the subtle Frenchman now strove to apply his declaration to *past* times: "*In the revolutionary period,*" said he, "*all that you say, my Lord, was true; nothing equalled our power; but that period is past. We are no longer able to raise the nation in a mass, to fly to the relief of the country when in danger. We can no longer persuade our fellow-citizens to open their purses in order to pour their contents into the national treasury, and to deprive themselves of necessaries for the public good.*" This was an acknowledgment that the boasted patriotism of the people of France had only subsisted during the reign of terror, and that the moment a system of comparative moderation

was pursued, their patriotism fled, and their enthusiasm disappeared.

During the course of this discussion, the superiority of the English negotiator over the French was most marked and decisive. But it was perfectly clear, from the very beginning of the negotiation, that the Executive Directory had not the smallest intention, or wish, to conclude a peace. They had been led on, step by step, by the wary and able conduct of the British Court; and, afraid of affording a hold to their enemies in France, who were very numerous, even in the two Councils, they were constrained, as it were, to enter upon a negotiation, which they were anxious to stop at the outset. They had now received those specific proposals, for which they had so loudly, and so peremptorily, called; and it, of course, became their duty to give a direct and positive answer to them; and, in case they objected to the terms proposed by the British Court, to specify the conditions on which they were disposed to make peace. But this plain and regular mode of proceeding did not suit the views of a revolutionary government, who were bent on the accomplishment of the same schemes of subversion and conquest, which had been devised and pursued by their predecessors. Instead, therefore, of either

accepting, or rejecting, the proffered terms, they had recourse to a measure, as unprecedented as the whole of their conduct, and insisted that Lord Malmesbury should deliver in his *ultimatum* in four and twenty hours.

On this strange demand, Lord Malmesbury observed, that, insisting on that point in so peremptory a manner, before the two powers had communicated to each other their respective pretensions, and before the articles of the future treaty could be submitted to the discussions which the respective interests to be adjusted necessarily demanded, was to shut the door against all negotiation.—And that, certainly, was the intent of the demand, which the Directory knew before they preferred it, neither would, nor could, be complied with.—His Lordship, however, expressed his readiness to enter into every explanation of which the state and progress of the negotiation might admit, or to discuss any counter-project which might be delivered to him, on the part of the Executive Directory, with that candour, and that spirit of conciliation, which corresponded with the just and pacific sentiments of his Court. But the Executive Directory, now pressed to a decision, and, unable to continue the negotiation any longer, without some specific answer or proposal, immediately replied, in general terms, that they would listen to no proposals

contrary to the laws, and to the treaties which bound the Republic;—at the same time, they ordered Lord Malmesbury to leave Paris in eight and forty hours, and the territory of the republic with all possible expedition. Thus ended this attempt at negotiation, to which not the smallest hopes of success could possibly be attached by any person who had paid the least attention to the uniform conduct of the French government.—While the British Court were explicit in their statement of terms, the French government studiously forbore either to enter into any discussion of those terms, for their rejection was general, or to give the smallest intimation of the conditions on which they would consent to restore peace to Europe. In fact, they were resolved to conclude no treaty, where they could not trace the conditions with the point of the sword, and to sign none but *separate* treaties of peace. This had been their uniform policy, and their constant conduct. It constituted part of the grand plan, for dismembering Europe, and for disjointing all the established systems and compacts, by which nations had hitherto been bound together, which the first adepts in Revolutionary Science, the Brissots, and the Condorcets, had suggested; to which their worthy rivals and successors, the Dantons, and the Robespierres, had pertina-

ciously adhered; and which the Directory themselves, who had been nursed in the same school, had adopted and cherished, with filial tenderness and affection. They felt bold in the progress of their arms in Italy, and, notwithstanding the checks which they had sustained in Germany, confident of the success of their great scheme, for forcing their way into the hereditary states of Austria, and of dictating peace at the gates of Vienna,—They had already imposed their own conditions on the Sardinian Monarch, whose tottering throne they had shaken to its basis; on the feeble Sovereign of Spain; on the Supreme Pontiff; and on all the minor Princes of Italy and the Empire. They had even forced Spain, now converted, through the weakness of her government, from an enemy capable of being formidable, into an abject tool of France, to declare war against Great Britain;—and the encouragement which they had received from their secret agents in Ireland and England, joined to their own gross ignorance of the real state and resources of both countries, led them to entertain the most sanguine hopes, of raising a rebellion in the former, and, by the aid of a powerful body of French troops, now prepared to invade it, to effect its total separation from the latter.

Indeed, the Directory scarcely deigned to conceal these objects. Aware of the discontent

which followed the rupture of the negotiation, and not so firmly settled on their seats, as to be without their fears for its consequences, they published a proclamation, in which they threw all the blame of the rupture on the British Cabinet, who had dared to propose to replace Europe in the same situation in which she stood before the war, and to call upon France tamely to forego all those claims to which the triumphs of her arms had given her so *reasonable* and *incontestible* a *right*. England was threatened with the vengeance of the republic; and the French were exhorted to persevere, without remission, in the prosecution of a war, which could not fail to terminate gloriously for France, and to produce the humiliation of a foe, who presumed to dictate conditions to a State which had imposed its own terms on every other member of the coalition.

In this bombastic appeal to the vanity of the nation, the Directory cautiously avoided to mention the loss of her colonies, in either India, or the generous offer of Great Britain to restore all her conquests, without any stipulation for herself, except what arose out of the interest which she had in common with her Allies. In fact, England stood, in respect of France, in precisely the same situation in which France stood in respect of Austria. She had

taken every thing from France, and France had taken nothing from her. According, therefore, to the principle assumed, by the French themselves, that the conquering party had a right to dictate terms to the conquered, England had the same right to dictate terms to her, which she had to dictate terms to the Emperor. But the Directory admitted no reciprocity of rights or claims; they asserted the power of the sword, though it could not extend to England; and they silenced the voice of justice with the thunder of their cannon. The French proclamation was answered by a manifesto, from the British Cabinet, (one of the most able and masterly productions to be found in the collection of British State Papers,)* in which the true motives, that actuated the conduct of his Majesty, were perspicuously and satisfactorily unfolded; the ambitious views, and designs, of the French government clearly developed; and the real causes of the rupture of the negotiation fully explained.

The new Parliament met before the negotiations at Paris were entered upon;—in the Speech from the Throne, on the Sixth of October, his Majesty informed the two Houses, that he was about to send a Minister to Paris; at

* See Appendix (A.)

the same time, that he called upon them to adopt the necessary measures for counteracting the declared intention of the enemy, to make a descent upon the British Coasts. Little debate occurred, in either House, on the motion for an address. The Opposition expressed their concurrence in that part of it which related to the approaching negotiation for peace; but, in the House of Lords, Earl Fitzwilliam, who was the disciple of Mr. Burke, and who had adopted all his sentiments, on the object of the war, and the end to which every effort of Ministers should be directed, opposed the address, because he disapproved of any negotiation, and considered it as improper to treat with France, until the Hereditary Monarchy of that country was restored. Impressed with this conviction, the noble Earl endeavoured to persuade the House, that the principle on which he had himself supported the war, was that on which it had been really undertaken by the government. He took a comprehensive view of the gigantic ambition of the Rulers of the French Republic, and made many just and forcible remarks on the state of vassalage to which they had reduced the greater part of Europe. He anticipated the most fatal consequences from the conclusion of peace with the Regicidal government,---nothing less than the destruc

tion of our Constitution, and the annihilation of our greatness and power. In conformity with these sentiments, his Lordship moved, as an amendment to the address, that the House should declare, that, strongly impressed with the justice and necessity of the present war, carried on for the maintenance of civil and moral order in the world, and for securing the balance of power in Europe, and the independence of all States, they would continue to give his Majesty a vigorous support in asserting the general cause of his Majesty and his Allies, and for preserving the good faith, dignity, and honour of the Crown, in full assurance that no steps would be taken inconsistent with those principles, or with the future safety and prosperity of these kingdoms. The amendment contained a further assurance, that the House would give a firm support to the King, in repelling the threatened aggressions of the Court of Madrid. Lord Grenville opposed the amendment, and entered into the same explanation of the object of the war which had been frequently given before by Mr. Pitt. The amendment was rejected, and the address adopted without a division. Earl Fitzwilliam, however, availed himself of his privilege, and entered a Protest against it, containing sub-

stantially the same sentiments which he had advanced in his speech.*

In the House of Commons, Mr. Fox congratulated himself on the adoption of a measure which he had long recommended, and which, in his opinion, might have been adopted, with an equal chance of success, at any period of the war, as at the present moment. He objected, however, to one part of the address, which expressed satisfaction *at the general tranquillity of the country.* He considered the assertion, that such tranquillity was owing to the wisdom and energy of the laws, including, of course, the two laws, which he had so strongly opposed in the last Parliament, as totally untrue; he said, that if it was meant to be contended, that, generally, tranquillity had sprung out of these laws, *laws which ought to be the object of terror and abhorrence,* and which were calculated to excite those feelings, he could not rejoice in it.—It was a tranquillity which every man, who loved freedom, ought to see with pain, which every man, who loved order, ought to see with terror.—But Peace, Peace, was, in his estimation, the panacea for every evil of the state. He had no difficulty, however, in asserting, that there were still great

* See Appendix (B.)

resources in the country, even in its present state, if the people were fairly and fully convinced that the blessings of peace were refused through the perverseness or ambition of France. He had no hesitation in saying, that if, after manifesting a disposition of candour, simplicity, and openness, in negotiating the terms of a peace, it should still appear that they refused to accede to a just and reasonable peace, we not only should find ample resources in this country for prosecuting the war with vigour, but we should prosecute it with such an unanimity of heart, as would draw forth all the energy, and all the vigour, of the nation. He said thus much in the contemplation of a clear, candid, and manly procedure on the part of our Ministers; and he had no doubt but he should be cordially joined, by every part of the country, in the declaration, that, if they so conducted themselves, they would meet with universal support.*.

This declaration called forth the warmest expressions of satisfaction from Mr. Pitt, who regarded the concurrence, now manifested, as the pledge of general unanimity, and the omen of great exertions, if, unfortunately, the grand object

* Woodfall's Parliamentary Reports, October 6, 1796, p. 42.

of peace should not be attained. Our situation, he said, held out to us a chance of peace, if the enemy were disposed to accede to it on just and reasonable terms; but, on the other hand, if they were still actuated by ambitious projects, another object would be gained by the course which had been pursued; they should unmask them in the eyes of Europe; they should expose the injustice of their policy, and their insatiable thirst of aggrandizement; and, if no other object were gained, they would, at least, be able to put to the proof the sincerity of the pledge which had been that day given, that, if the enemy were not disposed to accede to peace on just and reasonable terms, the war would be supported by the unanimous voice, and the collected force, of the nation.

Adverting to Mr. Fox's remarks, on the two laws supposed to be specially referred to in the address, Mr. Pitt observed, that if there were any ambiguity in the address respecting them, it was because they were so consistent with the spirit of the Constitution which they were framed to protect, and so blended with the system of our jurisprudence, so congenial to the practice of former times, and so conformable even to the letter of former acts, that it was impossible to make any discrimination. It was to be recollected, that they passed in

a moment of turbulence and alarm; and that they had been found most admirably calculated to meet the emergency of the times. The address did not apportion, with minute exactness, what degree of tranquillity had been derived from the operation of those laws, when blended with the Constitution, and what might have been enjoyed from the influence of laws previously subsisting; how much we were indebted for protection to the ancient strength of the edifice, and how much to those buttresses which were raised to support it in the moment of hurricane.

Mr. Pitt observed, that Mr. Fox had taken to himself all the merit of that policy which the Ministers had tardily adopted; and so confident did he feel himself in this ground of self exultation, that he declined all illustration of his victory, and made it merely the subject of one triumphant remark.—"You are now taking those measures which, if you had listened to my councils, you might have adopted four years ago."—But did it follow, Mr. Pitt asked, that the measure was right then, because it was right now? Might not a period of four years produce many events to justify a material change of policy, and to render measures wise and expedient, which, at another time, would have been neither prudent nor reasonable? Because we

did not chuse to make peace the day after an unprovoked aggression, might we not be justified in holding out pacific overtures after a lapse of four years? Mr. Fox's argument amounted to this—that, either peace must be made the day after the aggression, or not made at all.

The most flattering account was given, by Mr. Pitt, of the prosperity of the country. The state of our exports, during the six preceding months, had been equal to what they were in the most flourishing year of peace, 1792; and our foreign trade had even exceeded the produce of that year, which was the most productive of any in the history of the country.—The address was carried unanimously.

That part of the King's speech which related to the intended invasion of the country by the French, was taken into consideration on the 18th of October, when Mr. Pitt submitted to the House the outlines of a plan for the better defence of the country; by raising a supplementary militia of sixty thousand men, one-sixth of the number only to be called out to be trained at one time; twenty thousand fencible cavalry; and fifteen thousand men, to be raised in the different parishes, in proportion to their population, to be divided between the sea and the land service. Mr. Sheridan and Mr. Fox objected to an application of this nature, upon a

general assertion in the King's speech, of the enemy's intention to invade the country, without assigning any specific grounds for the belief that such intention existed. They did not, however, press a division. The resolutions, proposed by Mr. Pitt, were carried unanimously; and, being reduced into the form of bills, passed into laws, after much discussion, and various modifications, before the close of the year.—A bill was afterwards introduced, by Mr. Dundas, for enbodying a militia in Scotland, which passed without opposition. The whole force proposed to be maintained, for the service of the year 1797, amounted to one hundred and ninety-five thousand six hundred and ninety-four men for the land service; and a hundred and twenty thousand seamen and marines.

The additional expence attending the enlarged scale of preparation, on which the circumstances of the times rendered necessary, amounted to no less than £42,786,000, for the year 1797.—To supply which there were two loans, one, at the close of 1796, and the other in the subsequent spring.—The first of these amounted to eighteen millions, and was denominated the *Loyalty Loan*, being raised by the voluntary subscriptions of loyal and well disposed individuals;—the other, of thirteen millions, was raised in the usual way. The new taxes, imposed to defray

the interest of this sum, in addition to the permanent sources of revenue, were upon tea, coffee, spirits, sugars, pepper, bricks, auctions, brimstone, starch, iron, sweet oil, staves, stamps, postage of letters, stage-coaches, inhabited houses, newspapers, advertisements, and some other articles. The sum to be raised was so large that it was impossible to avoid the imposition of taxes which would not be felt, more or less, by every class of the community.—Indeed, few taxes can be greatly productive which are not laid on objects of general consumption.

While Mr. Pitt was employed in stating to the House the various particulars respecting the supplies, he noticed a circumstance which had occurred in the period between the dissolution of the old Parliament, and the meeting of the new one.—The pressing exigencies of the Emperor had rendered it necessary to lend him some immediate assistance, in order to enable him to carry on his military operations.—Mr. Pitt expressed his conviction, that no man would be of opinion, that such assistance, to a brave and faithful ally, which was requisite to preserve his independence, and to restore him to glory, should have been withholden. Ministers had thought proper to grant it, not ignorant of the responsibility which attached to their

conduct, not forgetful of their own duty, nor fearful of the event. The sum advanced was about £1,200,000; and Mr. Pitt proposed, that the House should place sufficient confidence in Ministers to authorize them to make similar advances when called for by similar exigencies. And he submitted to the House the propriety of voting the sum of three millions.* Such a circumstance as this could not elude the vigilant patriotism of the Opposition. Mr. Grey, however, who attacked other parts of Mr. Pitt's statements,—strange to say,—wholly omitted to notice it. But Mr. Fox spoke of it as an offence of so gross a nature as to call for the severest condemnation. He accused the Minister of having told the people of Great Britain, that he was a better judge than they, to whom their money, and how much of it, when and how, it should be disposed of, and given to any foreign Prince:—"If," said he, "these are the sentiments to be acted upon in this country; if the Minister be permitted to carry them into effect; I declare, for myself, that the constitution of this country is not worth fighting for. For this conduct, I say he ought to be impeached."† He adverted to the same subject

* Woodfall's Parliamentary Reports, December 7, 1796, p. 269.

† Idem. Ibid. p. 288.

on the following day. He considered the conduct of Mr. Pitt to be so gross, so flagrant, a violation of the constitution, that the House ought even to withhold the supplies, and, consequently, to put a stop to all the operations of the Government at the very moment when an invasion was expected, until sentence should be formally pronounced on the Minister. If he succeeded in his opposition to the supplies, Mr. Fox avowed his determination to move, on an early day, that his Majesty's Ministers, in granting a loan to the Emperor, without the consent of Parliament, had been guilty of a high crime and misdemeanor. With his usual arrogance, he professed a contempt for the opinion of the House, in case it should be found, as he had good reason to expect, different from his own, in which event, *he hoped the subject would be taken up without doors;* that the people would, in every part of the country, express their abhorrence of the doctrine maintained by Mr. Pitt, and that the House would be obliged (he did not mean by force, but by the voice of the country) to assert those rights which had been tamely and pusillanimously surrendered. For his own part, he regarded it as a more serious attack upon the constitution of the country, than that which was conveyed through the writings of Paine, or of *any*

man whatever. The nature of a libel was explained by its tendency to bring the constitution and government into contempt. Were he upon a jury, deciding upon any composition containing Mr. Pitt's speech of the preceding night, he would not hesitate a moment to pronounce it a libel upon the constitution; for if the doctrines laid down in it were constitutional, ours was a most vile and detestable constitution. Even after all the attacks which had been made upon it, and all the wounds which it had received, they should have still shed their blood in its defence; but, if this new defalcation were to be added to what they were formerly robbed of, he should wish to know what there was left to interest their feelings, or to excite their exertions? This would, indeed, be an incalculable addition to all the woes and calamities which the war had induced; and if, after what they had lost in money, in reputation, and in blood, they were also to submit to this oppression, the House of Commons was no longer to be considered as a branch of the constitution; and there would be little in our government to distinguish it from that of absolute monarchies.*

In answer to these strong animadversions,

* Woodfall's Reports, December 8, p. 360, 361.

and to this funeral oration on the departed constitution, it was observed by Mr. Pitt, that they who never before had an opportunity of hearing the speeches which Mr. Fox had been accustomed to deliver, and of observing the line of argument which he had been accustomed to employ upon every public question which had been agitated in that House, would certainly have supposed, on the present occasion, that now, for the first time in his life, he had felt real alarm for the liberties and constitution of his country; and, for the first time, a point had occurred so intimately connected with the preservation of their political rights, that, in the case of a decision, hostile to the opinion which he held, it was to be vindicated by nothing less than an appeal to the people. But it had happened to those who had often had occasion to attend to Mr. Fox, to hear the same danger represented, and the same consequences applied. It was not once, twice, or thrice, that he had reprobated, with the same emphasis, stigmatized with the same epithets, and denounced, as pregnant with ruin to the liberties of the country, measures which it had been thought necessary to bring forward, and which Parliament, in its wisdom, had thought proper to adopt. Nor was it the first time that Mr. Fox, and his political associates, had made a stand

behind *the last* dike of the constitution. It was not, he repeated, the first, the second, nor the third time, that upon points which a great majority of the House, and of the country, had deemed to be connected with the preservation of their dearest interests, Mr. Fox had raised the cry of alarm, and in which he had affected to see the downfall of the constitution, and the destruction of our liberties. Not many months even had elapsed, since he had stated, with the same confidence, and urged with the same fervour, that the liberties of England would be annihilated, and its constitution gone, if certain bills, then pending, should pass into laws;—they did pass, and Mr. Pitt affirmed, that a vast majority of the people of the country agreed that the substantial blessings of their free government had been preserved, and the designs of their enemies hitherto frustrated, by them. Nay, not many hours had elapsed, since Mr. Fox had given a two months notice of his intention to move the repeal of those acts, which he once represented as a grievance under which he could not sleep. There was, indeed, something striking, something peculiarly singular, in the manner in which this new constitutional light had broken in upon him. The declaration which had infused so deadly an alarm into his mind, the declaration by which the constitution

had been annihilated, was made the day before. It was admitted to have been made in a way the most clear and distinct; indeed, so clear as to magnify the danger, and to aggravate the offence. The declaration which Mr. Fox now felt to be so fatal to the liberties of the country, so repugnant to the principles of the constitution, as to render it incumbent upon him to make it the ground of an extraordinary proceeding, and the reason of signal animadversion upon the Minister, did not strike him, at the moment of its delivery, as of so much importance as immediately to call him up. It did not inspire, with any particular sensation, his honourable friend, Mr. Grey, a gentleman, by nature, not free from jealousy, and of a vigilance which it was not easy to elude;—it had not, however, drawn from him the smallest remark of any kind that could expose the danger with which it was pregnant, or betray the feeling which it was calculated to excite. It never disturbed the serenity of his temper, though, perhaps, not the least liable to irritation, nor had it prevented him from laying before the House the details of his various calculations with the most calm and placid equanimity, the very moment after he had witnessed the death-wound of the constitution! After an interval of debate, it had deranged none of his

calculations, it had not driven out of his head his reasonings on the *three per cents.* nor his premeditated remarks on the navy-debt, nor yet a single circumstance of objection, which the survey of the subject had presented, nor had it deterred him from allowing the resolutions to be carried with an unanimous voice! But after Mr. Fox had slept upon the subject, he discovered, that the speech which had been received the day before, in the manner stated, contained principles of such dreadful tendency, and threatened consequences of such fatal operation, as to lead him to propose not merely a censure of the doctrine, not merely the reprobation of the particular measure, not merely the punishment of the person by whom it was uttered; but as induced him, in the first instance, to take revenge for the error, or the guilt, of a Minister, by giving his negative to the whole resolutions, which had no relation to the subject, as would prompt him to suspend those supplies which would give authority to the negotiations for peace; or, in case of being reduced to that alternative, impart energy to the operations of war; as would induce him to tell the enemy, by the very next post, by which the unanimous determination of Parliament to provide for every situation would be conveyed, that the House of Commons had interfered to stop the

effect of their former decision, had suspended the means that were to add weight to the exertions of the Executive Government, and, at so critical a moment of the negotiation, had committed the interests of this country, and of her Allies, and flattered the hopes, and raised the pretensions, of the enemy. Such was the length to which Mr. Fox's proposition went.—It was not to remedy the imputed crime which had been committed, nor to guard againt the chance of its future occurrence; but it was calculated to derange every measure which might be in train, and every design which might be in contemplation. Mr. Pitt, however, expressed his hope, that when the gentleman had viewed the subject with more deliberation, when he had again slept upon his wrath, he would recur to that coolness which he had at first displayed, and that his vehemence and alarm would subside.

In answer to Mr. Fox's threat of moving the House to impeach Ministers, Mr. Pitt said, there was one thing which he would intreat of him, and he might be assured, that it was the only supplication that he would address to him on the subject, and that was, that, if he could prove to the House that he had violated the constitution, and had committed the crime of which he had been accused, Mr. Fox would not defer a single moment to put his threat in exe-

cution; that he would limit his efforts to that object, and that he would not combine with the vengeance he pursued, a measure which involved the ruin of his country. Let the punishment, destined for Ministers, light upon themselves alone, and let the consequences of the measures, which they adopted to avert the dangers which threatened their country, the means which they employed for the safety, for the salvation, of Europe, rest upon themselves. Thus much Mr. Pitt addressed to his political adversary, not from personal considerations, nor did he solicit the boon as a matter of personal indulgence; his request was solely founded in public motives.

Having thus exposed the conduct of the Opposition, in the mode of bringing forward the question, Mr. Pitt proceeded to justify the measure which had incurred such severity of censure, though he doubted whether, as it was reserved for particular discussion, he ought, in strict propriety, to utter a word upon it at present.—He admitted the justice of the general principle, laid down by Mr. Fox, that the House of Commons possessed the power of controlling the public expenditure; but he contended, that, like most other general principles, it was subject to limitation in practice. At every period since the commencement of the

æra, to which we refer for the pure practice of the constitution, in the best and most glorious æras in the history of our government, the principle of *extraordinaries* had been not merely received for individual expences, but recognized upon general views. It had prevailed under every administration, even under those with which Mr. Fox himself had been connected, during the three last reigns, and in the most approved periods of liberty and the constitution. Mr. Fox, then, held this principle without exception, while the practice of every government proved that it was always limited; and his whole argument was applicable to all the extraordinaries that ever were voted by Parliament. It was impossible, therefore, that he could have correctly stated—Mr. Pitt could scarcely think that he had *sincerely* stated—this argument which his experience must disavow, and which his knowledge must inform him, was neither consistent with the principles of the constitution, nor with its practice, at periods which deserved to be followed as examples.

Having stated the general nature of the question, Mr. Pitt considered it in a more confined point of view.—He asked Mr. Fox, whether it had ever occurred to him, that Parliament had sometimes committed to his Majesty, not new, but special powers, which superseded

all general principles. In point of fact, such discretionary power had been expressly committed to his Majesty.

He here adverted to the King's message of the 8th of December, 1795, and to the consequent act of Parliament, granting a vote of credit to the amount of two millions and a half; by which it appeared, that a power was given to his Majesty, to apply the sum contained in the vote of credit as the exigencies of the State might require.* Let the case be supposed, (which would not be a less suitable illustration, because it approached the fact) that powers had been conferred to give that assistance to the allies of this country, which our own interest, and the circumstances of their situation required, could any man doubt, that

* The words of the message were, "his Majesty recommends it to this House, to consider of making provision towards enabling his Majesty *to defray any extraordinary expences which may be incurred for the service of the ensuing year; and to take such measures as the exigencies of affairs may require.*" Here the greatest possible latitude, in the application of the money to be voted, was recommended; and, as the recommendation was adopted, of course given. Mr. Grey, himself, at the time, stated the object of a vote of credit to be, "to enable the Executive Power to meet expences unforeseen and unprovided for." And Mr. Fox, on the same occasion, observed, "Votes of credit were not intended to supply the deficiency of estimates, but merely to answer unforeseen occurrences, in the absence of Parliament."

the Minister, who should have hesitated to issue that sum, which, if granted, might have enabled our Allies to maintain their own cause, and to defend the safety of Europe,—and who should have allowed the enemies of Austria to complete her destruction by withholding a seasonable supply, would have been a traitor to his country, and would have merited the severest punishment. The vote of credit of the preceding year did actually invest the Executive Government with a discretionary power, of applying the sum granted in such manner as might best suit the public exigencies, and the money applied to the service of the Emperor was within the amount of the grant. He did not mean to say, that the discretion thus vested in the Crown was absolute, and independent of the controul of Parliament, or, that the Minister who exercised it in an improper manner was exempted from censure; but he should shew in what manner he understood this limitation when called upon to make his defence. He declared, that whatever might be the issue of the discussion, he would rather be convicted of having acted a principal part in the measure of granting a supply by which the salvation of Austria was secured, and the independence of Europe was maintained, than be acquitted for withholding that aid, by which the cause of

our allies was sacrificed, and the general interests of mankind compromised.

It was remarked by Mr. Fox, in explanation, that extraordinaries were, in some measure, inevitable; but they were an evil which ought not to be extended beyond the necessity, and it was criminal to resort to this expedient when other means might be employed. A similar opinion was maintained by Sir William Pulteney, who thought that it was never intended that subsidies to foreign powers should be supplied by a vote of credit. Mr. Grey, who had been perfectly silent and passive, when the subject was first noticed, now followed the steps of his leader, accused himself of the political sin of *omission*, the preceding night, and inveighed most bitterly against the Minister, for this alledged breach of the constitution. Mr. Wilberforce, on the other hand, thought the Minister fully justified, by the pressing urgency of the occasion, in advancing the money to the Emperor, and that no charge of intention to injure the constitution could possibly attach to him. He observed, that he did not expect any candour from the opposite side of the House. They had uniformly inveighed against Ministers with as little candour as moderation; with as little sincerity as truth.—The speeches of Mr. Fox might do well enough to inflame our domestic

and to embolden our foreign, enemies; but on the minds of a sober House of Commons, they could have no such effect. The impeachment of Ministers was a favourite topic with some people, but in this instance they had not deserved censure, but praise. Gentlemen might rant about the excellencies, the wounds, and the death, of the constitution; but they ought to know, that those to whom they addressed their *medley effusions* were more sincerely the supporters of freedom than they.* Mr. Fox's attempt to stop the supplies was rendered abortive by the good sense of the House, 164 members of which voted against his motion, and only 58 for it.

The subject was revived on the fourteenth of December, when Mr. Fox made it the ground of a specific charge against the Minister. On that occasion, he entered upon a full investigation of the measure, repeated all his former censures, and considered the constitution as annihilated, unless the House should join him in reprobating the conduct of Ministers, who were not deserving of an act of indemnity, as they had no circumstances of alleviation to urge in their own behalf. He concluded with moving "That his Majesty's Ministers, having autho-

* Woodfall's Reports, December 30, 1796, p. 315.

rized and directed, at different times, without the consent, and during the sitting of Parliament, the issue of various sums of money, for the service of his Imperial Majesty, and also for the service of the army under the Prince of Condé, have acted contrary to their duty, and to the trust reposed in them, and have therefore violated the constitutional privileges of this House." This motion was seconded by Mr. Combe, an Alderman of the City of London, in obedience to the orders of his constituents, who had assembled in their Common Hall that day, for the purpose of giving their opinions on a question, which they were so well qualified to discuss.

Mr. Pitt vindicated his conduct with a degree of seriousness, and solemnity, suited to the weight of the charge, and the importance of the questions which it involved.—He commented on the servile obedience of Mr. Combe, to the orders of his constituents, observing, that there was not, perhaps, any question on which a member of Parliament ought to allow the decided dictates of his own conscience and judgment to be superseded by the instructions of his constituents; but if there were any case in which a member ought to be particularly anxious to preserve his right of private judgment, it was in the present in-

stance, in which a criminal charge was the subject for consideration; for he thought it must be admitted, that it was impossible for the Alderman's constituents to decide, in a just and candid manner, on the propriety of giving a vote on a motion, with the particulars of which they must have been unacquainted, and more particularly as they must have been totally ignorant of the defence which his Majesty's Ministers meant to set up.

It was rather extraordinary that a member, who proclaimed himself the champion of the constitution, and who stood forward to claim compensation for the damages which it had received, by an infraction of it on the part of Ministers, should himself be so grossly ignorant of the constitutional character, and duty, of a representative, as to suppose that he was bound to obey the instructions of his immediate constituents, instead of acting, to the best of his judgment and conscience, for the general good of the country; and as not to know that the moment he was returned to Parliament, he ceased to be the organ of a Common Hall of the City of London, and became a representative of the aggregate body of the people of England. But a *civic* education is not the best calculated to lay the foundation of constitutional knowledge, or to convey

the most correct notions of Parliamentary duty.

After this gentle admonition to Mr. Combe, Mr. Pitt proceeded to examine the arguments of Mr. Fox.—While Mr. Fox himself was in administration, extraordinaries, to a large amount, had been used during the sitting of Parliament, and Parliament justified the act by a vote.—Yet did Mr. Fox condemn, in the Ministers, the very act which, when a Minister, he committed himself. Mr. Pitt admitted, that, according to the fundamental principles of the constitution, all grants must proceed from the Commons; that they were afterwards subject to their controul, was a principle undeniable;—but, although the Commons were possessed of the power of controlling the supplies raised by them, yet it was a circumstance proved to demonstration, by practice and general observation, that it would be impossible to carry on any wars, that it would be impossible for government to proceed, with due regard for the public safety, or with advantage to the public service, if extraordinaries were not raised by Parliament. He then shewed, that it had been the uniform practice of every administration, from the Revolution to that time, to have recourse to extraordinaries. He observed, that our constitution rested on great

and leading principles, but still no one would wish that it should sustain any injury by pushing those principles to a rigid and extreme excess. If we were to look into the record books of the constitution, we should find certain principles laid down, which seemed to contradict many acts of Parliament, which were held as strictly legal. If we examined the law of Parliament, we should find that it was derived, principally, from the general tenour of the whole of the principles of the constitution, illustrated by the particular urgency and necessity of circumstances. If this were the true way in which men ought to study the constitution, by applying the principles of it to the exigency of circumstances, how could that measure be deemed unconstitutional which was adopted in conformity to the best and most approved principles, as adapted to peculiar events? How could an act deserve to be loaded with obloquy, and reproach, which, in truth, it had been the practice of every administration to commit, at those periods when we had boasted most of the excellence of our constitution?

But it was not only the question of extraordinaries that was to be examined;—Parliament, finding it impossible to reduce every thing to estimated expences, had introduced the practice of giving votes of credit, with the

power, generally, to apply them as exigencies might require.

Mr. Pitt had endeavoured, as far as possible, to provide against extraordinaries; but it had been found impracticable to dispense with them wholly.—And Parliament had exhibited a great proof of its wisdom in not interfering with respect to the amount of the sums, which Ministers might think necessary for supplying the extraordinaries, but merely making them responsible for the application of the money, and the necessity of the extraordinary service to which it was appropriated. He considered a vote of credit to be a privilege granted to his Majesty's Ministers, to employ a given sum for any such purpose as the exigency of affairs might require. There was no circumstance, however unforeseen, there was no purpose, be it what it might, no possible event, to which Ministers might not think it requisite that a vote of credit should be applicable; no expences, upon sudden emergencies, which did not come within the spirit of a vote of credit. But Ministers were responsible to Parliament for the exercise of the discretion vested in them by the act, founded on a vote of credit, in the same manner, and to the same extent, as for the exercise of every other kind of discretion, which permanently belonged to them, as Ministers of

the Crown, and which they were bound to use for the safety, the welfare, and the dignity, of the country; a discretion the more important as it related to the disposition of the public money; and Mr. Pitt trusted that Parliament would not forget that it was their duty to weigh those unforeseen difficulties, in which alone government could use the powers with which it was entrusted.

"But Mr. Pitt carried the doctrine of responsibility still further.—He admitted that government was liable to be questioned for the propriety of the measures to which it might think proper to recur; he admitted, also, that if, at the time of using a vote of credit, Ministers foresaw any expenditure which appeared likely to be of consequence, either from its amount, or from the importance, or peculiarity, of the subject, if it admitted of a precise estimate, and if the subject were of such a nature that it could be divulged, without injury or inconvenience to the public, he would fail in his duty to Parliament, and would not act according to the sound principles of what he believed to be the constitution of the country, if he were not to state the nature of the emergency, and endeavour to estimate the expence. But if, from the nature of the exigency, it should be impolitic to divulge it,

he conceived the Minister justified who concealed it from Parliament till a future season. Upon these principles, as to the general question, Mr. Pitt was satisfied that his merits or demerits should be tried; if he had, in the opinion of the House, departed from the principles of the constitution, then he had committed an error in judgment;—if, through an error in judgment, he had departed from the principles of the constitution, he admitted that he ought to receive the censure of the House, notwithstanding that error proceeded from his having felt it to be his irresistible duty, in common with the rest of his Majesty's Ministers, to act upon principles which he conceived the best calculated to ensure the prosperity and advantage of the country.

Having justified the general principle on which he had acted, he came to consider the particular measure to which it had been applied.—As to the utility of the advance to the Emperor, whether it could have been made in a more proper form,—whether, by a previous application to Parliament, it would not have been attended with a greater degree of inconvenience, —whether the advance was not made at a time the most critical that could possibly have occurred,—these were the questions which he proceeded briefly to discuss. He called upon the House to look back to the state of things

on the Continent, in the month of July, or August, in the preceding year; a period when they saw, with regret and apprehension, the triumphant arms of the French Republic at the gates of Munich, and the territorial possessions of the powers opposed to France in danger of being wrested from them.—When they looked back to this period, let them, at the same time, contemplate the slow, firm, measured, and magnanimous, retreat of the gallant Austrian army, and the consequences which followed from a retreat only calculated to ensure the success of their future operations.—Would they then ask themselves, dry as the question might be, when so animated a subject was presented to the mind, how far the assurance of the aid which this country was disposed to grant, might have invigorated the spirit of a nation exerting its utmost efforts to resist an invading foe, how far it might have given confidence to their resources, and enabled them to prosecute that line of operations which had been attended with such distinguished success? With these considerations in his view, was there any man, he asked, who could regard, as a matter of consequence, whether the expence of £900,000, or £1,200,000, had been incurred by the country? Was there any man who could question the propriety of the sum allotted for the object,

and would be willing, for the sake of so paltry a saving, to give up our share in promoting a service which had terminated so honourably for the character of our allies, and so beneficially for the general interests of Europe? Who would not rejoice that he was admitted into partnership so illustrious, and accompanied with such brilliant success?

——————————Me credite Lesbon,
Me Tenedon, Chrysenque, et Cyllan Apollinis urbes,
Et Scyron cepisse. Meâ concussa putate
Proculuisse solo Lyrnessia mœnia dextrâ.

The money, Mr. Pitt observed, was not given as a subsidy, but advanced as a loan; and that opinion of the public, which had been so often alluded to, in the course of this debate, was, he had no doubt, decidedly in favour of the measure. There was not, he believed, an Englishman who did not most ardently sympathize with the magnanimity, the resources, the spirit, and the perseverance, which had been displayed by Austria in her recent exertions, and who did not rejoice that the contributions of England had been brought forward in aid of operations which had been equally marked by their gallantry and success. He would not think so ill of the good sense of his countrymen, as to suppose that they could

regret any trifling expence, which had been the means of obtaining such signal advantages.—The only question was, whether there was any doubt of the exigency of the measure, whether there was any doubt of its necessity, and whether the service would have been performed by a previous application to Parliament.

He reminded the House, that, at the time he applied for a vote of credit, he had expressly referred to a loan, then in contemplation, to a much larger amount, for the purpose of affording the necessary assistance to the Emperor.—It was stated at the time, that the precise period at which it would be wanted was uncertain, as it depended on the result of an intercourse between his Majesty and the Emperor. It must have been evident, therefore, that the vote of credit was moved with the view of applying it in the manner in which it was applied. Mr. Pitt, however, was aware that, in consequence of the drain of money, some time must elapse before the influx of trade would be such as to render a loan practicable in its execution, or safe in its impression; for of all subjects, that which related to credit, or the stagnation of money, the delicacy of which every man knew, was that which required particular circumspection. He had thought, however, that a much shorter period

would have sufficed for the removal of the existing scarcity; but, having been deceived in his expectations, he deemed it advisable to take the step which was now the subject of discussion, a short time previous to the dissolution of the last Parliament.—The first principle of his defence, therefore, was this—that when the campaign was advancing, so that the Emperor could not wait for any proof of the reality of his hopes of an increase of pecuniary supply, in conformity with what had been done before, and according to principles recognized by Parliament, Mr. Pitt thought it expedient, for the success of the Imperial arms, to send him the means of repelling the enemy.

He next proceeded to consider, whether the advance so made to the Emperor had produced greater embarrassment than it would have produced if made some months before, if a loan had been made. He avowed his belief that the situation of the mercantile world, and the pecuniary state of the country, were more favourable at this time, than they were at the periods when the several remittances were issued to the Emperor. The contractors for the last loan had apprized Mr. Pitt of the inconveniences which had resulted to commerce, in general, from the immense, but necessary, drains in the money market, and

they had felt, that any specific proposition to guarantee a fresh loan to the Emperor would have sensibly affected that market, would have depreciated the funds, and depressed the public credit. Had he, under these circumstances, proposed a public loan; had he gone to Parliament, when Parliament first sat to deliberate on public measures; had he, while the necessities of the Empire, and the dearest interests of Europe, depended, in some degree, the one for relief, the other for preservation, on the remittance of certain portions of that sum of £1,200,000; had he, at that eventful crisis, done any thing that might, in its ultimate consequences, increase the difficulties of that Ally, and endanger the liberties of Europe, what would have been the language of Mr. Fox, who had, that night, censured his conduct, and made it the subject of a specific motion?

He repeated, that, in the opinion of those most conversant with the state of the money market, the most alarming embarrassment would have been produced by the adoption of a different line of conduct.—They felt the inconveniences necessarily attendant upon a state of warfare; but they more than felt the justice of the contest which had produced them.—They thought that the pecuniary situation of

the country was such as would have rendered the public avowal of any loan to the Emperor extremely impolitic, and that, by an ill-timed discussion of its propriety, it would have produced those evils which he had, in part, detailed. To them he submitted whether a public loan would be prudent in such circumstances; but they were unanimous in their preference of the adopted mode. This was a proof that he could have no intention to violate the Constitution. But he had not hastily and immaturely adopted the alternative; that he made these preliminary arrangements; that his inquiries on the subject were as general and earnest as had now been avowed, was well known, not only to the individuals, with whom he consulted, but also to his colleagues in the Ministry. He appealed, without fear of contradiction, to those in his confidence, whether such was, or was not, his conduct on that occasion? At that time, too, the situation of the Empire was so peculiar, that his Majesty's servants could not but have a strong and *influencing* sense of the impropriety of affording publicly the aid which that situation so imperatively required. The arms of the French were victorious in almost every quarter; the Empire was threatened with destruction, and Europe with ruin. The treasury of the Empire was exhausted, and many of her Princes had

been forced to abandon her defence. It was at this conjuncture that his Majesty's servants, faithful, at least, to their sense of the danger, afforded to Germany that assistance which, he was proud to say, had been, in a great measure, the means of saving not only that particular country, but a vast portion of Europe. Actuated by these considerations, hurried on by existing necessities, to adopt a particular measure, he flattered himself that it would ultimately be acknowledged, that the act itself, even supposing it to be unconstitutional, could not be the result of a deliberate intention to violate acts of Parliament.

The resolution to perform this act had not been taken without serious contemplation of the risk; nor yet without maturely considering every relation in which it could possibly connect itself with the Constitution.—It was not taken in defiance of law, nor made a solitary exception to all former usage. It was not taken to cripple our finances, nor had it, either prospectively, or retrospectively, any one thing in common with a deliberate insult to the House. But it was taken in a way, and upon an emergency, which warranted the measure. Mr. Pitt expressed his conviction, that had Parliament been acquainted with the danger of Austria, and had even determined to give

the necessary assistance, the publicity of the measure would have defeated the object. The effect of a knowledge of the pecuniary distress of the Emperor, joined to the difficulty which a prompt supply would have produced, could not fail to bear, with peculiarly embarrassing weight, on the course of exchange. Whereas the transmission of £1,200,000, in different sums, and at different periods, tended greatly to relieve the Emperor, and to preserve the credit of the country from that depression, which the same sum, granted at once, and in the form of a public loan, would have occasioned.

The acts thus performed had been performed distinctly in compliance with solemn engagements; they were acts, in execution of pledges which had been previously given.—Acting, during the recess, from the conviction that those pledges were given by the letter and the spirit of existing treaties; acting, after the Parliament had met, under the sanction of those treaties with no intention, then, and surely with none now, of setting up their own judgment as the standard of, or superior to, the judgment of the House of Commons, Ministers, Mr. Pitt thought, might be permitted to avail themselves of the examples of all similar treaties in favour of similar conduct.

As to the transaction itself, no line of separation could fairly be drawn between the necessity which gave existence to the measure, and the motives which influenced its adoption.—"If the sense of Parliament could have been taken, there was no doubt that they must have given their sanction to the assistance afforded to the Emperor; but what had been done had been done, in a great measure, before Parliament could have been assembled, to consider its expediency. Mr. Pitt having thus stated to the House the circumstances of that situation, which rendered it impossible for Austria to continue her warlike operations without assistance from this country; having endeavoured to render his own conceptions of the act of sending money to an Ally, without the previous consent of Parliament, manifest; and having submitted to the House those principles, in the practical exertion of which he had pursued that line of conduct which was now so loudly condemned by Mr. Fox; he felt that he should be wanting in duty to himself, if he did not desire the House to compare those principles with his conduct.

As to the question of extraordinaries, the idea had been suggested, and something like an argument attempted to be deduced from it, that, if its spirit were adhered to, no part of a

vote of credit could be employed to pay foreign troops; it had also been said, that, of such an application of public money so voted, our annals scarcely afforded any, and if any, not apposite, examples. Mr. Pitt, however, undertook to produce precedents in point, instances in which votes of credit had been appropriated, by our ancestors, to the payment of foreign troops. Previous to the revolution, this very thing had been done by the Crown; but in subsequent periods, in periods not the least favoured in our annals, although not altogether free from the stains of calumny, and party-violence; in the reign of King William, in the year 1701, accompanied by circumstances of a singularly important and curious nature, the Parliament voted an extra sum for the payment of foreign forces. This sum was voted not regularly as a vote of credit, but it succeeded the grant of a vote of credit, and was a measure which, although it incurred some trifling opposition, was carried unanimously. Such was the conduct of our ancestors at the period of the revolution. In the reign of Queen Anne, in the years 1704 and 1705, both subsidies and grants had been employed in the payment of foreign forces; and without the authority of Parliament. In 1706, a transaction, more directly characteristic of that for which the Ministers of the present day were now cen-

sured, was publicly avowed, and as publicly discussed; yet it seemed that Mr. Fox had overlooked it, because, if he had known it, he certainly ought to have abandoned his assertion. There appeared, in the annals of the Parliament of that day, an account of three different sums, each considered, by the Opposition, as a violation of the constitution;—they were transmitted to the Duke of Savoy, to the Emperor, and to Spain. A sum, too, had been paid, in the same manner, to the Landgrave of Hesse, for a corps of his troops, then in the pay of England. These sums were not voted regularly after specific propositions, submitted for that purpose to the House, but were advanced to those Sovereigns, without the previous consent of Parliament. Not even estimates of the services, for which the sums had been paid, were laid before the House, till six weeks after its meeting. The sum transmitted to the Emperor was distinguished by peculiar circumstances. It had been sent, not at the close, not during the recess, of that session in which it was at first announced to Parliament, but before the end of the preceding session. These proceedings did certainly attract notice. The House of Commons, and the public, had been addressed on the unconstitutional nature of the measure; then, as now, every effort which ingenuity

could suggest had been employed; every vehicle of public communication had been rendered a vehicle of asperity and censure on the conduct of Ministers. It became the subject of a solemn discussion—a discussion, apparently, not less vehement, than it was laboured and diffuse. But how did the Ministers of that day retire from the combat? Did they retire overwhelmed with the virulence and abuse of the violent, with the censure of the discerning, and the reproof of the temperate, members of that Parliament? Or were their actions distinguished by the approbation of the Commons of Great Britain? — The Minister of that day had the satisfaction to see the attack of his adversaries repelled, and their expressions of censure changed to applause.—That Minister heard his conduct approved, and the journals of the House were made to bear record that the sense of its members was, that the sums advanced to the Emperor, on that occasion, had been not only productive of the preservation of the empire, but had also supported and maintained the interests of Europe. In the year 1718, at the beginning of the reign of George the First, another instance of the application of the public money occurred, though not so analogous as that just noticed. A message had been received from his Majesty, soliciting the aid of the Commons, to make such an augmen-

tation of the actual forces of the country as might be deemed necessary to place it in a respectable state of defence; because there had been an apparent intention to invade the country.—At this time the King took Dutch troops into his pay, and the money voted to raise and maintain native troops was disbursed for the use of a foreign corps. In the year 1734, a general vote of credit was granted; and applied, on such occasions, and for such purposes, as might, at any time, during its existence, arise out of the exigencies of the time. On the 18th of February, in the following year, another vote of credit was granted, and a treaty concluded with Denmark;—and both these votes were applied to purposes, in their nature, not unlike those which necessity led the Ministers of the present day to apply the vote of 1796. An advance to the Duke of Arenberg, commander of the Austrian forces, in the year 1742, was noticed in debate, and censured in the administration of Mr. Pelham,—a name as dear to the friends of constitutional liberty, perhaps, as any that could be mentioned;—but the enquiry was avoided by moving the previous question. It happened, however, that, not long after, the same question was made the subject of a specific discussion. It appeared, that the advance had been made under the authority of an

assurance expressed by Lord Carteret, and not in consequence of any previous consent of Parliament; but it appeared, also, that the progress of the Austrian troops was considerably accelerated by the influence of that aid, and their subsequent successes chiefly owing to it. The vote of censure, therefore, which had been founded on the act of Lord Carteret, was amended, and the advance declared necessary to the salvation of the Empire.—In 1787, the expences incurred by our endeavours to protect Holland were placed under the head of secret services, and without the smallest objection being started; and this was an unanimous recognition of the act, which, had it been the offspring of 1796, Mr. Fox, influenced by his new opinions, would, no doubt, have marked with his disapprobation.

In fact, the Opposition had not discovered that the act which they had loaded with every species of obloquy of which language was capable, was an act which had been again and again approved. It was even within the admitted principle of successive Parliaments. But the members who had sat in the last Parliament had not forgotten, that, when a loan of four millions and a half was proposed to be granted to the Emperor, the intention of granting that loan was known as early as February

1795. A message had been received from his Majesty, stating, that a negotiation was pending with the Emperor to maintain 200,000 men; and the loan was to be granted when the negotiation should be brought to a successful issue. Soon after the answer to this message was communicated to the Throne, a motion was made for an account of £250,000, advanced to the Emperor in May, 1795; and again a similar motion was made, for an account of £300,000, also advanced to the Emperor in the month of May following. With respect to these sums, it was agreed by the House, before the loan was debated, that they might be afterwards made good out of the loan.—After the negotiation was concluded, the loan was debated; the House was divided, but no objection was made to these advances. As to the sums advanced to the Prince of Condè's army, they had hitherto been only paid to it for services rendered, as forming a part of the Austrian forces.

After having considered and examined the serious accusation, preferred by his opponents, in every possible point of view, he asked, on what principle of justice he could be rendered the object of a criminal charge for merely having followed the uniform tenour of precedent, and the established line of practice? By what

interpretation of a candid and liberal mind could he be judged guilty of an attempt wantonly to violate the constitution? He appealed to Mr. Fox himself, who was not the last to contend for the delicacy which ought to be used in imputing criminal motives to any individual, and to urge, in the strongest terms, the attention which ought to be shown to the candid and impartial administration of justice. "In what country," exclaimed Mr. Pitt, "do we live? and by what principles are we to be tried?—By the maxims of natural justice, and constitutional law, or by what new code of some revolutionary tribunal?"—Not longer than eighteen months before, the same principle had been adopted, and suffered to pass without any animadversion; and now, at a crisis of tenfold importance, and where the measure had not outrun the exercise of a sound discretion, it was made the foundation of a criminal charge. The Ministers were accused of a direct and wanton attack on the constitution. It was not supposed that they had been actuated by any but the blackest and most malignant motives. They were not allowed the credit of having felt any zeal for the interest of the country, nor of those advantages which the measure had produced to the common cause.

Mr. Pitt concluded his defence with the following animated appeal to the House.—" I have now weighed the whole merits of the transaction before the House, and with them I am well content to leave the decision. While we claim a fair construction of the principles and intentions which have guided our conduct, if it shall appear that, in the smallest instance, we have deviated from any constitutional principle, we must submit to the consequence, whatever be the censure or the punishment. It is our duty, according to the best of our judgment, to consult the interest of the country; it is your sacred and peculiar trust to preserve, inviolate, the principles of the constitution. I throw myself upon your justice, prepared, in every case, to submit to your decision; but with considerable confidence that I shall experience your approbation. If I should be disappointed, I will not say that the disappointment will not be heavy, and the mortification severe; at any rate, however, it will be to me matter of consolation, that I have not, from any apprehension of personal consequences, neglected to pursue that line of conduct which I conceive to be essential to the interests of the country, and of Europe. But while I bow, with the most perfect submission, to the determination of the House, I cannot but remark

on the extraordinary language which has been used on the question. Ministers have been broadly accused of a wanton, and a malignant desire, to violate the Constitution;—it has been stated, that no other motive could possibly have actuated their conduct. If a charge of such malignant intention had been brought against men, who have affirmed the present war to be neither just nor necessary, and who, on that ground, cannot be supposed friendly to its success; who have extolled, nay, even exulted in, the prodigies of French valour; who have gloried in the victories of the foes of civil liberty,—the hostile disturbers of the peace of Europe,—men who blasphemously denied the existence of the Deity, and who had rejected, and trampled on, every law, moral and divine; who have exclaimed against the injustice of bringing to trial persons who had associated to overcome the legislature; those who, gravely and vehemently, asserted, that it was a question of prudence, rather than a question of morality, whether an act of the legislature should be resisted; those who were anxious to expose, and to aggravate, every defect of the Constitution; to reprobate every measure adopted for its preservation; and to obstruct every proceeding of the Executive Government to ensure the success of the contest in which we

are engaged in common with our allies;—I say, if such a charge of deliberate and deep-rooted malignity were brought against persons of this description, I should conceive that even then the rules of candid and charitable interpretation would induce us to hesitate in admitting its justice, much more when it is brought against individuals, whose conduct, I trust, has exhibited the reverse of the picture which I have now drawn. I appeal to the justice of the House, I rely on their candour; but, to gentlemen who can suppose Ministers capable of those motives which have been imputed to them on this occasion, it must be evident that I can desire to make no such appeal."*

Seldom has a more serious charge been preferred against a Minister; and never was any charge met with more candour, examined with more ability, or repelled with more success. In transmitting money to the Emperor, under the circumstances stated, Mr. Pitt had certainly incurred an unusual weight of responsibility; but he felt that the great cause in which the nation had embarked was at stake; and he hesitated not a moment in risking the consequences of a measure which was calculated

* Woodfall's Reports, December 14, 1796, p. 374---395.

to retrieve it from impending ruin.—The good was public;—the danger personal. And the man who, in a similar situation, would not have displayed the same fortitude, and have exposed himself to the same risk, might be a virtuous individual, but could be no Statesman, and would be wholly unqualified for the office of Prime Minister of a great country. Mr. Bragge supported the arguments of Mr. Pitt, and declared his opinion, that his conduct, so far from meriting censure, was highly deserving the gratitude of the nation; but, at the same time, with that sober, discreet, and just, regard for the Constitution, which is the distinguishing characteristic of genuine patriotism, he was desirous that such a proceeding, dictated, as it was, by necessity, should not be drawn into precedent in future, notwithstanding the auspicious consequences which had now resulted from it.—He, therefore, moved an amendment, which went, in fact, to substitute the following motion, for the original motion of Mr. Fox;—

"That the measure of advancing the several sums of money, which appear, from the accounts presented to the House in that Session of Parliament, to have been issued for the service of the Emperor, though not to be drawn into precedent, but upon occasion of special necessity, was, under the peculiar circum-

stances of the case, a justifiable and proper exercise of the discretion vested in his Majesty's Ministers by the vote of credit, and calculated to produce consequences, which have proved highly advantageous to the common cause, and to the general interests of Europe."

Some discussion ensued on the amended motion, in which Mr. Sheridan took a conspicuous part. As usual, he brandished the weapons of wit and ridicule, with considerable address; but studiously omitted to notice every leading principle, and every prominent fact, upon which Mr. Pitt had professed to rest his defence.—He pretended, indeed, to examine the *precedents* referred to by the Minister, but in a way so loose and vague as to justify the belief, that he had not taken the trouble to consult them.—"The first precedent," said he, "is that, in 1706, of the advance to the Duke of Savoy;"* but he must have supposed the memory of the House to be very defective, as they had heard Mr. Pitt refer, generally, to various precedents before the revolution, and, specifically, to one in the year 1701, to another in 1704, and to a third in 1705. In this case the money had been sent during the recess of Parliament. He briefly adverted to the pre-

*, Woodfall's Reports, December 14, p. 403.

cedents in 1787, and in 1792; and those he seriously stated to be the precedents on which the Minister relied for his justification, though Mr. Pitt had not only mentioned those three; but, specifically, *seven or eight* others.* Mr. Sheridan, evidently mortified at the *argumentum ad hominem*, to which Mr. Pitt had recourse at the close of his speech, and the force and justice of which the House had most sensibly felt, made an awkward endeavour to retort it on the Minister, by observing, that it came with an ill-grace from him, whose ministerial conduct had been one continual attack upon the liberties of his country. Were it possible that his venerable and illustrious father would look down upon the three last years of his history, to see him sit and applaud his confidential friends in reviling *the sacred institution of juries*;† and that one of the most illustrious pensioners of the Crown had not even been rebuked for saying, that Courts of Justice were become nothing more than schools for sedition, to see him cover-

* See Mr. Wilberforce's Speech in Woodfall's Reports, December 14, p. 412.

† '*Sacred* as Mr. Sheridan always considered the institution of Juries, whenever it suited the purpose of the moment so to represent them, it has been seen that, in the case of Mr. Reeves, he exerted his utmost efforts to deprive a British subject of all its benefits and advantages.

ing the whole force of the country with barracks and *bastiles*, without even submitting it as a question to Parliament; to see the whole country put under military government, and the people placed under subjection to the bayonet, while, as if this were not sufficient, their mouths were shut up, and themselves prevented from meeting to consult on their grievances; and, proceeding in his climax of constitutional violence, wresting from them, one after another, all their rights, came at last to take out of the hands of the representatives the guardian disposal of their money.—Of all the Ministers that ever governed the affairs of this country, he was the man who had employed, in his administration, the worst of means, and entailed upon his country the greatest of evils. If two motives could be assigned to his conduct,—if it could be said, on the one hand, that he could be guided by views of power, and sentiments of ambition, or by feelings of patriotism and virtue, he should not hesitate to ascribe the former to a Minister, whose whole life had marked the same disregard for the one, as attention to the other.*

This empty rhodomontade is literally transcribed from the most accurate reports of the

* Woodfall's Reports, December 14, p. 407, 408.

Parliamentary proceedings of the day. It is evident that the orator's zeal not only outstripped his judgment, but confounded his reason; for he omitted to inform his expectant audience what would have been the sensations, what the sentiments, of the venerable patriot, whose shade he so emphatically invoked, had he been able to burst through the confines of the grave, to re-visit the earth, and to contemplate the public actions of his son,—"the worthy offspring of a worthy sire." This democratic rant, considered as a specimen of popular eloquence, fell far short of many of the wretched effusions of the political field-preachers of the London Corresponding Society; and, viewed as a grave address from a member of the British House of Commons to his colleagues, upon a question of great public importance; it must sink still lower in the estimate of impartial wisdom, which can descry in it nothing but the malignity of spleen, the misrepresentations of party, and the falsehoods of faction.

From some allusion which had fallen from Mr. Sheridan, in the course of his speech, Mr. Wilberforce was led to entertain an apprehension that he (Mr. Sheridan) was about to become the defender of his (Mr. Wilberforce's) morals; and sensibly alive to the consequences of any defence from such a quarter, he hastened to

assure Mr. Sheridan that he did not thank him for the proffered service; he wished his morals to be left to shift for themselves, and not to have his countenance.* In his reply, Mr. Fox contended, that the only real defenders of the constitution were to be found in the ranks of Opposition; and that the whole transaction, which gave rise to the present discussion, was *a juggle and a fraud.*—He insisted that none of the precedents were applicable to the point in question; adverted to the *persecutions* which took place four years before, when, by the distorted laws of the country of legal tyranny, *Ministers* had obtained verdicts;—declared, that if the measure in question were not reprobated he should regard that man as a hypocrite who pretended to see any distinction between this government and an absolute monarchy; and concluded with asserting, that he did not retract one of the strong opinions which he had advanced, in former days;—and that he had no hesitation in saying, that occasions might arise in a, comparatively, free country, when men might be driven to the necessity of resistance.†—On a division, Mr. Bragge's amendment received the sanction of the House; *two hundred and eighty-five* members having

* Idem. Ibid. p. 412. † Id. Ibid. p. 418, 419.

voted for it, and *eighty-one* against it. Thus was a projected vote of censure converted into a mark of approbation; and the Opposition, who had brought forward the discussion, had the mortification to find, that, in the support of Mr. Pitt's principles and conduct, the New Parliament seemed disposed to follow the traces of the old.

It was not till the close of the year 1796, (the 30th of December) that the rupture of the negotiation at Paris, the particulars of which have been detailed, were officially notified to Parliament, by a Royal Message.—In this message his Majesty declared, that he had been actuated by the sincerest desire to restore the blessings of peace; and that he had now the consolation of reflecting, that the continuance of the calamities of war could be imputed only to the unjust and exorbitant views of his enemies.

Mr. Pitt moved the address on this message, in which the House concurred with his Majesty in lamenting the rupture of the negotiation, and in imputing it to the ambition of France, and assured him of the necessary support for the continuance of the war with vigour and effect. He introduced his motion by a speech of great length, in which he expressed his extreme disappointment, that his sincere endea-

vours to procure a peace had failed of success; took a full and comprehensive view of the origin of the war; of the hostile disposition and views of the enemy; of all the circumstances attending the negotiation for peace; and of the relative disposition of the two countries. He shewed, that the conduct of the Directory had been marked by equivocation and subterfuge, and terminated in a gross and premeditated insult to our Sovereign, by the abrupt dismission of his representative. And he proved, from the new constitution of France, that the alledged pretext for refusing to restore the Austrian Netherlands to the Emperor, had no foundation in fact.

The address was opposed by Mr. Erskine, who undertook the gigantic task of proving, in opposition not only to Mr. Pitt's assertion, but to the general conviction of Europe, and to the most authentic documents, and best established facts, *that France was* NOT *the aggressor in the war, and that the prolongation of the contest was not owing to the pride and obstinacy of the enemy.**—But, at the very opening of his speech, a convenient indisposition spared him the trouble of entering into a detail which could only have ended in his

* Woodfall's Reports, Dec. 30, p. 617, 618.

exposure and confusion.—This is stated more positively, because his intended speech was afterwards published, and exhibited the most irrefragable proofs of his perfect ignorance of the main facts on which his conclusion was founded, and the most shameful inattention to the leading circumstances of a case on which he undertook to decide, in the most dogmatical manner.*

This apparent defect, however, in the opposition to the address, was amply supplied by Mr. Fox, who entered, at great length, not merely into the immediate subject of discussion, but into all the points connected with the original question of aggression, with the conduct of the Ministers in the progress of the war, and with the avowed dispositions of the different rulers of Republican France, with an ingenuity which no man knew better how to adapt to his purpose; but with a sophistry unworthy of his talents; and for an object still more unworthy his character and country; he

* I must refer my readers, for proofs of the truth of the character which I have here given of Mr. Erskine's memorable "*View of the Causes and Consequences of the present War with France*," to the two Letters which I addressed to that gentleman on the subject; but more particularly to the Second Letter, in which they will find comments on such instances of ignorance and inattention as cannot fail to excite their surprise.

pleaded the cause of France against England. His speech, indeed, in the mouth of a French Minister, would have been appropriate, consistent, and natural. Nor could the most acute and intelligent observer, had he first seen it in the French language, have discovered in it a single principle, feature, or sentence, which would have betrayed its origin, or induced even a suspicion that it was of English birth. A more laboured and ingenious defence of their conduct and principles, the united talents of the French Directory, their Ministers, and Councils, could not possibly have supplied. Every argument which he had employed, from the commencement of the war to the present moment, was repeated, on this occasion; pressed with greater vehemence, and decorated with fresh embellishments. With unblushing effrontery, he maintained the *sincerity* of the *French* Directory, and the *insincerity* of the *British* Cabinet, in their avowed wishes for peace, and in the negotiations for producing it.* Forgetful, or rather regardless, of his former peremptory declaration, that this country could obtain from France honourable terms of peace, that if a disposition to peace on our part were made known to her, her concessions

* Woodfall's Reports, Dec. 30, p. 623.

would be as ample as we could wish, he was not ashamed, a few months after, to observe, that it was not to be expected that the French would readily listen to terms of peace dictated by the present Ministers, unless they were reduced to that state of necessity and submission which would leave them no alternative.*— And yet had he constantly urged these very Ministers to open a treaty with the Directory! Now, too, he had *no hopes of peace on any permanent basis,*† except the present system of policy was entirely changed, and the principles on which the war was undertaken were totally disavowed! And, that the House might not misconceive him, he repeated the remark in a subsequent part of his speech, saying,— "I believe, in my conscience, that this country cannot have peace, without a change of system in politics, nor without a *change of Ministers.*‡ *I say that your system must be altered, and your Ministers changed, or you cannot have peace.*" In the month of February, the necessity of this change had not occurred to Mr. Fox, (or rather Mr. Fox then admitted that it had actually occurred,)§ and he did not pretend that any subsequent event had intervened to produce it.

* Idem. Ibid. p. 623. † Ibid. 625.

‡ Ibid. p. 644.

§ See page 533 of volume iv.

In the course of his oration, he declared that he loved the Constitution under which he was born, but not the Constitution which Ministers had created,—in other words, not the Constitution as it existed in 1796. He concluded one of the most mischievous and unprincipled speeches which had been delivered, in any place, since the French Revolution, with moving, as an amendment, that the House had learned, with inexpressible concern, that the negotiation, which his Majesty had lately commenced for the restoration of peace, had been unhappily frustrated; that, in so awful and momentous a crisis, they felt it their duty to speak to his Majesty with that freedom and earnestness which became men anxious to preserve the honour of his Majesty's Crown, and to secure the interests of his people; that, in doing this, they deplored the necessity they were under of declaring, that, as well from the manner in which the late negotiation had been conducted, as from the substance of the memorial, which appeared to have produced the abrupt termination of it, they had reason to think his Majesty's Ministers were not sincere in their endeavours to procure the blessings of peace, so necessary for this distressed country, and that all prospect of pacification seemed entirely at an end;—for, on the one hand, his

Majesty's Ministers insisted upon the restitution of the Netherlands to the Emperor, while, on the other, the French Directory, with equal pertinacity, refused to restore it; that, under these circumstances, the House could not help lamenting the rashness and injustice of Ministers, whose long-continued misconduct had produced this embarrassing situation, by advising his Majesty, before the blessings of peace had been unfortunately interrupted, to refuse all negotiation for the adjustment of the then-subsisting differences, although, at that time, the Netherlands, now the main obstacle to the return of tranquillity, so far from being considered as an object of contest, was solemnly renounced, and the peace of Europe offered into his Majesty's hands upon the basis of that renunciation, and upon the security and independence of Holland, whilst she preserved her neutrality towards France; that the House had further deeply to regret, that, soon after the commencement of the war, when, by the vigour of his Majesty's arms, with the assistance of his allies, the Republic of Holland had been rescued from invasion, and the greater part of the Netherlands had been recovered by the Emperor; at a time, too, when most of the Princes of Europe, with resources yet unexhausted, continued firm in their alliances with Great Britain,

Ministers did not avail themselves of this high and commanding position for the negotiation of an honourable peace, and the establishment of the political balance of Europe; that, on the contrary, without any example in the principles or practice of this or any other nation, it was with pain the House recollected his Majesty's Ministers refused to set on foot any negotiation whatever with the French Republic; not upon a real or alledged unwillingness on his part, to listen to the propositions now rejected by her, or to any other specific proposal of indemnity or political security, but upon the arrogant and insulting pretence, that her government was not capable of maintaining the accustomed relations of peace and amity amongst nations; and that, on this unfounded, and merely speculative, assumption, his Majesty was advised to continue the war to a period when the difficulties in the way of peace had been so increased, by the defection of most of the powers engaged in the confederacy, and by the conquests and consequent pretensions of the French Republic; that the House, having thus *humbly* submitted to his Majesty the reflections which his gracious communications immediately suggested, felt themselves in duty bound, for the information of his Majesty, and the satisfaction of an exhausted people, to proceed, with unremit-

ting diligence, to investigate the causes which had produced our present calamities, and to offer such advice as the alarming and critical circumstances of the nation might require.

Posterity will scarcely believe, that there existed, in either House of Parliament, a man, who, under the peculiar circumstances in which the nation was now placed, and with a knowledge of all the solemn decisions of the great councils of the nation, recorded in their journals, on the various topics here so pointedly referred to, could so far forget what was due to his country, to his own character, and to the assembly which he addressed, as to present, for its adoption, a paper which contained as many falsehoods as assertions; and which was not more repugnant to truth, than degrading to the national character.

The comments which Mr. Fox's speech drew from Mr. Dundas, were pointedly strong, and strictly just. He characterized it as the most mischievous speech he had ever heard in that House. Not one word had Mr. Fox said to add strength to this country, or to favour the negotiation;—on the contrary, nearly the whole of it was calculated to afford protection and encouragement to the enemy. He not only assisted them in the arguments which they had used themselves; but he suggested to them

several ingenious arguments of his own, which they had failed to produce in the course of the negotiation. Mr. Dundas expressed his belief, that it had never before occurred to the most inflamed patriot, to the most envenomed oppositionist that ever existed, to plead the cause of the enemy.* After Mr. Grey had repeated the arguments of Mr. Fox, the House divided, when, fortunately for the honour of the country, only *thirty-seven* members voted in favour of the amendment, while it was indignantly rejected by *two hundred and twelve.*† The address was, of course, carried.

The King's Message was discussed, on the same day, in the House of Lords, when Lord Guildford proposed the very same address which

* Woodfall's Reports, Dec. 30, p. 647.

† It may not be improper, nor yet wholly useless, to state *who* the members were that could hold such language to the country, at such a period.—The following is the list of the Minority: J. Baker; Sir Charles Bampfylde; George Barclay; R. Biddulph; hon. E. Bouverie; J. Brogden; J. R. Burch; F. Burdett; G. Byng; Alderman Combe; J. Courtenay; hon. T. Erskine; C. J. Fox; C. Grey; J. Hare; W. Hussey; N. Jeffreys; J. Nicholls; D. North; H. Peirse; W. Plumer; J. Richardson; Lord W. Russel; J. Scudamore; R. B. Sheridan; G. Shum; W. Smith; Lord R. Spencer; Lord Stanley; M. A. Taylor; T. Thompson; G. Tierney; hon. H. Tufton; hon. J. Tufton; S. Whitbread; J. Walwyn; C. C. Western; J. Jekyll; and General Tarleton.

was moved by Mr. Fox in the Lower House.—He was supported by the Duke of Bedford, and the Earls of Derby and Abingdon; while the conduct of the government was most ably defended by Lords Grenville and Auckland, and the Earl of Kinnoul. Eight Peers only voted for the amendment, and eighty-six against it.

Lord Fitzwilliam, upon this, as upon a former occasion, differed both from the Ministers and from the Opposition.—He condemned the former for attempting to open a negotiation for which the enemy had not afforded the smallest encouragement. — They had never retracted the inadmissible principle, advanced in the note to Mr. Wickham, nor the offensive decree of November, 1792, for encouraging the people of other countries to rise up against their established governments. No circumstance had occurred to convince him that their former proud and dangerous principles, and pretensions, did not exist, in full force, at the present hour. He insisted that there could be no safety in fraternizing with such a people; and he illustrated his argument by a reference to the conduct which France had observed towards Genoa, Tuscany, and various other neutral states.

Thus far his Lordship's argument was

indisputably, sound; and it would be difficult, indeed, to find, in the conduct of the French government, any change which could encourage the British Minister to think that they were really desirous of peace with this country; or that a safe and durable peace could be concluded with them. But the conclusions which Lord Fitzwilliam drew from these premises were by no means just. Reverting to his old position, he contended, that Ministers had changed their ground, and departed from the principles on which they had embarked in the contest; and that, therefore, those noble friends of his, who had agreed to support them in the prosecution of the war, could no longer do so with any regard to consistency. This remark induced one of those noblemen, Earl Spencer, to declare, that when he felt it his duty, as a friend to his country, to give his support to government, before he became a member of the administration, he did so, because he thought France the unprovoked aggressor; and that the war was not only just and necessary, but also unavoidable. His principles, however, had never led to the extreme length to which Lord Fitzwilliam's argument went. With regard to the conduct of Ministers, he was able to say, and indeed felt himself bound to declare, that, in the late nego-

tiations, they had done their utmost to effect what his Majesty had most sincerely at heart—an earnest and anxious desire to restore peace to this country, and to Europe, on terms equally just, honourable, and solid. This declaration from a nobleman, whose integrity the breath of scandal never polluted, who was known to speak the deliberate sentiments of his mind, and to advance nothing as fact, of which he had not the most positive knowledge, was, of itself, sufficient to decide the question of Ministerial sincerity, and to prove the falsehood of the imputations cast upon the cabinet in the rejected amendments of Lord Guildford and Mr. Fox.

In the subsequent amendment, however, now moved by Lord Fitzwilliam, in conformity with the principles which he had ever avowed, there was nothing reprehensible, nothing injurious to the honour of the country; nothing to depress the spirit of the people; and nothing to calumniate the government. It proceeded, on the contrary, on a noble, manly, and somewhat of a chivalrous, principle; but still it was such as, in the present circumstances of the country, and in the actual state of the continent of Europe, it would have been highly impolitic in the Ministers, who must, in all their public transactions, bear those relative circumstances

constantly in their minds, to countenance or adopt. This amendment gave his Majesty full credit for his anxious desire to conclude a secure and honourable peace, but declared the conviction of the House, founded on an attentive observance of the beginning, progress, and events of the late negotiation, that no future attempt, of a similar kind, on our part, could be wise, decorous, and safe, until the common enemy should have abandoned his hostile disposition to all other states, by ceasing to place his own internal regulations above the public law of Europe, to insist, that all others should, in all cases, sacrifice the faith of their alliances, and the protection of their ancient and dearest interests, to the maintenance of his treaties, and the gratification of his ambition; and, for ever, to appeal to the people against their own lawful government.—It further stated, that the House should never consider the possessors of the power in France, (under whatever name or external form of government that power might be exercised) as capable of maintaining the ordinary relations of peace and amity, until they should have disclaimed, in conduct, no less than in words, that system which, having emanated from the original principle of the French Revolution, still continued to operate in a more dangerous, because in a more spe-

cious, form, and which, in an address to his Majesty, in January, 1794, that House had described, as "a system disposing, arbitrarily, of the lives and property of a numerous people, violating every restraint of justice, humanity, and religion,—equally incompatible with the happiness of that country, and with the tranquillity of all other nations."

Such was the substance of his Lordship's amendment, which certainly gave a just character of the French government, and of the nature and tendency of their principles; such a character it was as proper and becoming for individuals to exhibit, as it was to impress on the public mind the sentiments and principles which his Lordship avowed, as far as they were warranted by facts; but it by no means followed, that it would be prudent, or politic, for the House of Peers to give it a kind of legislative sanction, or for the Ministers themselves to concur in a measure, which might, in the actual state of affairs, raise a serious obstacle to the accomplishment of their avowed object,—the restoration of peace to Europe. After a few words from Lords Spencer and Grenville, the amendment was negatived without a division;—and both Houses adjourned, on the same day, to the fourteenth of February.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

State of Public Affairs at the commencement of 1797—Extraordinary run on the Bank—Communications between Mr. Pitt, and the Directors of the Bank—Causes of the Scarcity of Money at this time—Order in Council prohibiting payments in Specie at the Bank—Royal Message on the Subject to Parliament—Address moved by Mr. Pitt—Opposed by Mr. Fox—He accuses Mr. Pitt of having ruined the nation—Asserts that the King had claimed a power to annihilate all the property of the Creditors of the Bank—Censures the Order in Council—Maintains that payment in Bank Notes is no payment at all—The Opposition represent the Bank as in a state of Insolvency—Mr. Pitt explains the nature of the Money transactions between the Government and the Bank—Pointed remark of Mr. Dent—Mr. Sheridan moves an Amendment to the Address—The Amendment is rejected, and the Address carried—A Secret Committee is appointed to investigate the affairs of the Bank—Satisfactory Report of the Secret Committee—Flourishing state of the Bank—Its assets exceed its debts by nearly four millions—Vast increase of Commerce—An Act is passed for giving legal effect to the Order in Council—Motion of Mr. Grey in condemnation of the Order in Council, and of the conduct of Mr. Pitt—Mr. Pitt justifies himself—Exposes the inaccuracy of Mr. Grey's statements—Mr. Pitt censured for

breaking a promise which he never made—Amount of Bank Notes in circulation—Different opinions of the policy of the Bank, in diminishing the number of their Notes—The true principle of Banking explained by Mr. Pitt—He censures some of the maxims of Adam Smith as injudicious—He shews that the quantity of Specie in the country has not been diminished since the war—Mr. Grey's vote of censure negatived by two hundred and six votes against sixty—Alderman Combe moves an Address to the King, to remove his Ministers—He accuses Ministers of being hateful to the French, and, therefore, unfit to make a good Peace for England—Observations on this novel discovery—Unconstitutional doctrine, advanced by Mr. Curwen, respecting the duty of a Representative, exposed—Motion rejected by two hundred and forty-two votes against fifty-nine—Mr. Fox moves a repeal of the New Treason and Sedition Acts—Repeats his former arguments on the Subject—Asserts that Charles the Second was a Papist—Abuses the Scotch Judges—Panegyrises Gerald, who had been transported for Seditious practices—Maintains that Public Sedition cannot be dangerous to a State—The Motion is opposed by Serjeant Adair, who vindicates the Scotch Judges, and traces the late attempt on the King's life, to the inflammatory harangues of the Seditious Societies—The public conduct of Mr. Fox truly characterized by Colonel Fullarton—Mr. Fox's motion lost by a great majority—Mr. Harrison's motion for an inquiry into Sinecure Places, and Fees of Office—He is answered by Mr. Pitt—Mr. Pitt explains the nature of the various Offices—Shews Sinecure Places to be sanctioned by the solemn decisions of Parliament—Moves the previous question—Mr. Sheridan's Speech—His impressive exhortation to œconomy and retrenchment, the probable effect of personal experience—He attacks Mr. George Rose, who accuses him of falsehood, and demon-

strates the justice of his accusation—Mr. Sheridan explains —Mr. Fox charges Mr. Pitt, and Lord Grenville, with taking Sinecure Places for themselves—Mr. Pitt defended against this charge—Its gross injustice proved—Memorable instance of his disinterested and patriotic spirit—Illiberal attack on Mr. Canning by Mr. Fox—Mr. Fox charged with selling two Sinecure Places to pay a gaming debt—The Speaker interposes—Mr. Canning justifies his own conduct—The previous question carried—Mutiny in the Navy—Factious conduct of the Seamen at Portsmouth —They appoint delegates, and present petitions to the House of Commons, and the Admiralty—Demand a redress of grievances—Their demands complied with—They return to their duty—Mr. Whitbread moves a vote of censure on Mr. Pitt for his conduct respecting the mutiny—Negatived—Fresh mutiny at the Nore—The Mutineers seize two Store Ships, and stop the passage of the River—Government reject their demands—The mutiny quelled—Execution of Parker, the principal Mutineer—Act for the prevention, and punishment of attempts to excite mutiny in the Army and Navy, introduced by Mr. Pitt—Eloquent Speech of Mr. Sheridan in support of it—Mr. Pitt proves the mutiny to have been the effect of a settled system to excite disaffection in the country—His judicious observations on the origin and nature of our Penal Laws—Introduces a Bill for preventing all intercourse with the Mutineers—The two Bills pass without opposition—Pay of the Army increased—Mr. Grey's motion for a reform in Parliament—Charges Mr. Pitt with inconsistency—The charge repelled—Mr. Erskine seconds the motion—Mr. Pitt opposes it—Mr. Fox supports it—The House rejects it—The Duke of Bedford moves, in the House of Lords, an Address to the King, to dismiss his Ministers—The motion negatived by ninety-one votes against fourteen—Bill for allowing Roman Catholics, and

Protestant Dissenters, to hold Commissions in the Supplementary Militia, opposed by Lord Kenyon, and the Bishop of Rochester—Supported by the Duke of Norfolk, who asserts the superior purity of the Protestant faith; but accuses the Church of displaying a spirit of persecution—Lord Grenville defends the Established Church, and contrasts its liberal and tolerant spirit with the bigotry, intolerance, and persecution of the Church of Rome—The House reject the Bill—Vote of Credit—Parliament prorogued.

[1797.] The early part of the year 1797 was, on many accounts, the most gloomy period of Mr. Pitt's political life. The failure of the negotiation for peace, combined with other causes, some of a temporary, others of a permanent, nature, had materially affected the credit of the country; the funds had sunk full three per cent. beneath their lowest point of depression, towards the close of the American war.* The bank, from various circumstances, had experienced such an unusual demand for cash, as to excite very serious alarm. The seeds of rebellion had begun to unfold themselves in Ireland;—the spirit of disaffection had extended to our seamen; and the nation was involved in a

* The lowest price of the three per cent. consols, in 1781, was 54¼. In February, 1797 they were as low as 50½; and, in the following month, they were reduced to 50—and in April to 48½.

contest with a malignant and implacable foe, of which it was difficult to conjecture, either the termination or the result. The situation of Prime Minister, at such a crisis, was certainly the least enviable, and the most arduous, of all situations. Mr. Pitt was fully sensible of the difficulties of the times, of the importance of the duties which he had to discharge, and of the weight of the responsibility which attached to his office; but, fortified by the innate integrity of his heart, and by the mature firmness of his mind, he did not shrink from the efforts which his country demanded at his hands, but manfully opposed the storm which seemed to threaten her with destruction, and resolved to proportion his exertions to the exigencies which called for their application.

His first care was to provide for the safety of the Bank, in which the stability of the national credit was essentially implicated. In the course of the two last years, Mr. Pitt had various communications with the Bank, on the subject of the payment of Treasury bills, or bills drawn on the Treasury, for public services from abroad, accepted by the commissioners, and made payable at the Bank;—and, in respect of other accommodations, which the Directors of the Bank had been in the constant habit of affording to government. On these accounts,

the Bank were considerably in advance to government, and they had repeatedly requested the Minister to adopt some other means for the payment of the Treasury bills, so as to prevent the advances of the Bank from ever exceeding the sum of half a million. To the propriety of this request Mr. Pitt had acceded, but the multiplicity of objects of greater consequence, which incessantly pressed upon his attention, and the magnitude of the sums drawn from the continent, and from Saint Domingo, where the expence was enormous, had hitherto prevented him from having recourse to those measures which were necessary to afford that relief to the Bank which had been so properly, and so repeatedly, urged.—He had, at length, however, resolved, by means of a new loan, and of other financial regulations, to provide the requisite means for this purpose.

In the course of these communications, the Governor of the Bank had apprized Mr. Pitt, in the year 1796, that there had been very unusual demands upon the Bank for cash. This was ascribed, in some degree, to the failure of many of the country banks, which had occurred three years before, and the consequent diminution of the number of bank notes in circulation;—and to the great increase of commerce; the latter requiring, of course, the em-

ployment of larger capitals, and an extended *circulating medium*, at the very time when the circulating medium had been considerably lessened by the former. Indeed, from the increase of freight, insurance, and other extraordinary expences, it is perfectly clear, that a larger capital is necessary in time of war, than in time of peace, for carrying on even the same degree of commerce.—In Scotland, and in Ireland more particularly, the scarcity of money had occasioned great demands on the bank, while the scanty harvests of two succeeding years had rendered it necessary to expend very large sums in the purchase of corn. The subsidies, or loans, granted to our continental allies, though never paid in British coin, had occasioned an exportation, to a certain extent, of bullion and dollars. It appeared, however, by the authority of Mr. Boyd, that not more than £1,200,000, in bullion, had been transmitted to the Emperor, the remainder of the loans to him having been paid in bills of exchange. There was one other cause, of a different nature, which concurred to produce this extraordinary run upon the Bank.—A very general apprehension prevailed, that the French would attempt an invasion of the country; and this induced numbers of persons to collect all the specie they could, and to keep it out of circulation, on the sup-

position that, in the confusion which such an event would produce, it would be the only kind of property for which the necessaries of life would be exchanged. In a conversation, on this subject, with some of the Bank Directors, Mr. Pitt observed, that, by all his information, he could not learn that any hostile preparations, of consequence, were making in France, to invade this country, except the fleet which was refitting at Brest, after being driven from the coast of Ireland; but that he could not answer that no partial attack on this country would be made by such a mad and desperate enemy as we had to contend with.

On the 24th of February, 1797, the Deputy-Governor of the Bank, and Mr. Bosanquet, one of the Directors, had an interview with Mr. Pitt, on the subject of the alarming decrease of their cash, in that and the preceding month; and to enquire of him how far he thought the Bank might go on paying cash, and when he would think it necessary to interfere before the cash was so reduced as to be detrimental to the immediate service of the State? Mr. Pitt truly regarded this as a matter of great importance, and told these gentlemen, that he must be prepared with some resolution to bring forward in the Council, for a proclamation to stop the issue of cash

from the Bank.—And he thought it would become proper to appoint a Secret Committee of the House of Commons, to investigate the state of the affairs of the Bank;—to which the Deputy Governor acceded, observing, that the Directors were perfectly prepared to produce a statement of their affairs to such a Committee.*

Accordingly a Council was assembled, on the 26th of February, when, in consequence of Mr. Pitt's representations, they declared it to be their unanimous opinion, that it was indispensably necessary, for the public service, that the Directors of the Bank of England should forbear to issue any cash in payment, until the sense of Parliament could be taken on that subject, and the proper measures adopted thereon, for maintaining the means of circulation, and supporting the public and commercial credit of the kingdom, at this important conjuncture; and they ordered a copy of their minute to be transmitted to the Directors of the Bank, who were required to conform to the same, on the ground of the exigency of the case, until the sense of Parliament could be taken.

This preliminary step was followed by a message from the King, delivered to the House

* See the printed Correspondence between Mr. Pitt and the Bank.

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of Commons, on the 27th of February, accompanied by the above Order of Council, and recommending the subject to the most serious attention of Parliament. This message was taken into consideration, the next day, when Mr. Pitt moved the appointment of a Secret Committee, for the double purpose of ascertaining the existence of the necessity on which the Order of Council had been issued, and for examining and stating the total amount of out-standing demands on the Bank of England, and likwise of the funds for discharging the same. They were to communicate the result of this inquiry to the House, together with their opinion of the expediency of providing for the confirmation and continuance of the measures taken, in pursuance of the minute in Council.

After the temper which the Opposition had displayed, during the whole of the present contest, it was not to be expected, that *any* measure proposed by Mr. Pitt would be suffered to pass, without a repetition of that abuse, and of those calumnies, which they had incessantly lavished upon him.—Mr. Fox now accused him of having brought the nation to the brink of destruction; he did not scruple to assert, that, by the present measure, the King, or Executive Government, had claimed a power to annihilate, by one breath, all the

property of the creditors of the Bank.* Nay, even this imputation, monstrous as it was, did not satisfy his factious mind—for a mind more factious than his was, at this period, the annals of British history do not exhibit,—for he soon added: "The measure that has actually been adopted is the most pernicious in principle, and the most dangerous in its effects. It will not easily be erased from the memories of men, or from the annals of the country, that, whatever may be the vaunted theory of the constitution, whatever the national value of our rights, whatever the *pretended* security of our laws, one word from the King may have the effect to *destroy* one half of the property of the country!"† To such extremes was he carried, by the blind fury of party zeal, that he contended there was no difference between a refusal to pay the dividends in specie, and a refusal to pay them altogether! Although he well knew, that not one person in a thousand ever received his dividends in specie,—a preference being generally given to bank-notes. He told the Minister, that he had no right to reproach the French with the disorder in their finances; since he had himself brought this country into the same situation.—

* Woodfall's Reports, Feb. 28, 1797, p. 93.

† Idem. Ibid p. 94.

He insisted that, by the measure in question, we should be on the very verge, aye, even in the gulph, of ruin!* Mr. Pitt, he said, had disgraced himself, and ruined his country. He deprecated all partial inquiry into the affairs of the Bank, and demanded that all their transactions, and all their proceedings, should be laid open to the public; although it was perfectly clear that the public could have no farther right to investigate the affairs of the Bank, than what arose out of the necessity of the case; and that this necessity required only that it should be ascertained, whether the assets of the Bank were fully sufficient to answer every demand upon it. But Mr. Fox had little judgment;—in the present case, indeed, it was blinded by faction;—he always ran into extremes, and was never satisfied with proportioning his remedy to the evil which called for its application. Other members of the party represented the conduct of the Bank as an act of insolvency, asserted that Bank paper must *necessarily* fall into discredit; and expressed their fears that it would sink as low even as *assignats* and *mandats*.—And, with as little knowledge of the fact, they contended, that if the government would repay the Bank all the

* Ibid. p. 106.

money which it had advanced, for the public, it might resume its payments in specie. This erroneous statement Mr. Pitt hastened to correct, though he neither thought it worth his while to notice the abusive language of Mr. Fox, nor would suffer himself to be led, by the violence of his opponents, to enter into explanations which the most imperious motives of public duty required him to avoid. He asked, whether it was imagined that the Bank advanced their specie to government, and that he, with rapacious hand, had seized upon so much money? By far the greater part of the sum due to the Bank consisted of floating advances, not now made for the first time; nor was there more out-standing at that time than there had been, on many occasions, before he came into office.* The advances were commonly made in notes, and paid in the same manner. Unless the Bank had made no other advances than those to government, and unless these had occasioned an issue of paper, producing a demand for specie, which otherwise would not have occurred, it could not be said, that the advances to government could, in any view, produce the difficulties of the Bank for cash. It was not impossible that, on some

* Mr. Pitt's speech, Feb. 28, p. 117, Woodfall's Reports.

future occasion, a loan might be required for taking up these floating advances, but was it conceived that such a loan would be in specie? and, though it were, it could not supply the Bank with a single additional guinea in cash. It was truly observed, in this debate, by Mr. Dent, that gentlemen appeared more desirous of entering into personal abuse than of promoting the public interest;—and not all the sarcastic remarks of Mr. Sheridan, of which he was not sparing, could destroy the force of the observation. Mr. Sheridan moved an amendment, the intent of which was to extend the objects of inquiry; but it was negatived by two hundred and forty-four votes against eighty-six; and the original motion of Mr. Pitt, for the appointment of a Secret Committee, was carried.—The Committee was accordingly appointed, and consisted of Sir John Scott, (the Attorney-General;) Mr. Hawkins Browne; Mr. Bragge; Alderman Anderson; Mr. John Fane; Mr. Thomas Grenville; Mr. Wilberforce; Mr. Grey; Sir John Mitford, (the Solicitor-General;) Mr. Hussey; Mr. Wilberforce Bird; Mr. Plumer; Mr. Blackburne; and Mr. Bramston. The composition of this committee, supposing the Minister to have had any influence in appointing it, afforded the strongest proof that there was no intention of concealing any thing which was

necessary for the real object of the inquiry; any thing, in short, which the public interest did not require to be concealed. Meanwhile, a bill was passed, with the utmost expedition, for repealing an existing law which prohibited the issue of bank notes for a less sum than five pounds.—The object of this bill was to remedy the inconvenience which must accrue, in the payment of small sums, from the stoppage of payment, in specie, at the Bank.

The Secret Committee lost no time in entering upon the important inquiry entrusted to them by the House; and, so early as the third of March, they made their first report, in which they stated, that, after due examination, they found that the total amount of the outstanding demands on the Bank, on the 25th of February, 1797, (to which day the accounts could completely be made up) was, £13,770,390. —And that the total amount of the funds for discharging these demands, (not including the permanent debt due from Government of £11,686,800 which bore an interest of three per cent.) was, on the same day, £17,597,280; and that the result was, that there was, on the 25th day of February 1797, a surplus of effects belonging to the Bank, beyond the amount of their debts, amounting to the sum of £3,826,800, exclusive of the debt due from

Government. In a second report, they declared their opinion, that it was necessary to *provide* for the confirmation and continuance, for a time to be limited, of the measures taken in pursuance of the order of Council, on the 26th of February. They afterwards presented a third report, in which they traced the progress of the extraordinary run on the Bank, and the principal causes which had contributed to produce it; which causes have been already noticed. But, in immediate reference to the measure adopted by the Council, on the representations of Mr. Pitt, they stated that, between the 21st of February, the day on which the Governor of the Bank imparted his apprehensions to the Minister, and the 26th of that month, the drain on the Bank for cash had increased in a still more rapid and alarming proportion; and that, supposing such drain should continue to operate, and still more so, if it should increase, the committee were of opinion, that there was strong reason to apprehend, that the Bank might, in the course of a few days, not only be prevented from affording the usual and necessary supply of cash for the public service, but ultimately be totally disabled from continuing its payments in cash in the ordinary course of its business; and that, by a further reduction to any considerable amount, the danger to the public would

have been greatly increased, and it might have become much more difficult to re-instate the affairs of the Bank, and restore the general circulation of the kingdom; that there was no reason to suppose, that the drain would, on the ensuing Monday, and following days, be in the least diminished, but rather that it would have been considerably augmented; that no means were suggested, by the Directors of the Bank, for preventing the danger which was apprehended, nor did any such occur to them at the time, or had since been suggested to the committee; and it, therefore, appeared to the committee, that no measure could then have been taken, which would have prevented such danger, other than the suspension of payments in cash, required by the minute in Council;—they were, therefore, of opinion, that, on the 26th of February, there did exist a necessity for issuing the minute of Council of that date, though, at the time, not warranted by law.

There was one part of the last report of this committee which proved highly gratifying to every friend of his country, particularly after the bold, unqualified, assertions which had been recently made, by Mr. Fox, and his associates, that the nation was in a state of bankruptcy.—It stated, that the balance of trade, in favour of this country, had, during the war, very

greatly increased, so as, in each of the years, 1793, 1794, 1795, and 1796, to have amounted, upon an average, to about £6,500,000, creating a balance, on the whole, of about twenty-six millions, notwithstanding the diminution of the general balance, by the sums paid (upwards of seven millions in two years) for the great importation of corn, occasioned by the extraordinary scarcity which lately prevailed, and encouraged by large bounties, to an extent much beyond the ordinary scale of commerce in that article.

On the 13th of March, Mr. Pitt brought in a bill for enabling the Bank of England to issue notes in payments of demands upon them, instead of cash, in pursuance of the late order of council to that effect.—This bill underwent much discussion in its progress through the House, but ultimately passed the Commons on the seventh of April; and, in a few days, having been adopted by the Upper House, without alteration, received the Royal sanction, and became a law. Its operation was limited to the 24th of June.

Mr. Grey, who was a member of the Secret Committee, appointed to investigate the affairs of the Bank, could not so far forget his political habits, or lose sight of his political pursuits, as to subject his own opinion to that of others, or to acquiesce in the sentiments and

decisions of a majority. As if resolved to see, and to acknowledge, no other culprit than Mr. Pitt, and to make him solely responsible for every adverse event, he brought forward, on the 16th of May, a series of resolutions, the object and intent of which were to hold up the Chancellor of the Exchequer, as guilty of the most criminal misconduct, for the disgrace which had fallen upon the Bank of England, and for all the bad consequences which resulted from it.—In opposition, as he acknowledged, not merely to the majority, but to *every* member of the Committee,* as well as to the declared sense of the House, he maintained, that the Order of Council was not proper, and was not necessary. In the speech, with which he prefaced the introduction of his resolutions, he went over the whole of the correspondence between the Chancellor of the Exchequer and the Directors of the Bank, and inferred from thence, that the embarrassments which the Bank experienced, and which occasioned the consequent stoppage of payment in cash, were solely imputable to the unfair dealings, and breach of faith, in Mr. Pitt. His resolutions went to establish this point; they were nineteen in number, but the first eighteen must be considered only as *pre-*

* Woodfall's Reports, May 16, p. 148.

mises, whence the *conclusion* was drawn in the last, which stated, that it appeared to the House, upon the most attentive consideration of the circumstances above-mentioned, that the Chancellor of the Exchequer had been guilty of a criminal inattention to the public interest, and a high breach of duty, by which the credit of the nation had been materially impaired.

Mr. Pitt entered into a brief justification of his conduct, against these allegations;—he said very little on the necessity and propriety of the Order in Council, as they had been fully admitted by the Committee, by the House, by the Directors of the Bank, and by the public at large. He considered the motion as resting on two distinct grounds; First, the advances made to government by the Bank in general, and the remittances made to the Emperor; Secondly, the conclusion drawn by Mr. Grey, that these two circumstances were the principal causes which produced the order for suspending the issuing of cash by the Bank.—He denied the justice of Mr. Grey's inference, and maintained that many other causes than those assigned by him, had combined to produce the event which formed the ground of his censure. He admitted, that repeated applications had been made to him, on the part of the Directors of the Bank, respecting the advances and remittances com-

plained of; and that assurances had been given by him, that the advances should be reduced to half a million.—But the House was in justice bound to consider the peculiar nature of those circumstances which prevented him from carrying into execution the assurances so given. —When the magnitude and diversity of the operations of the present war were fairly viewed;— when the unforeseen exigencies, which, called for unforeseen expences were candidly weighed, it would not be denied, that it was completely impossible to ascertain, with any exactness, the amount of the disbursements likely to be incurred, or to form estimates on which any reliance could be placed. Since, then, the validity of this position could not be impeached, and the impossibility of bringing forward *certain* estimates, was established by experience, the only question which remained for the House to decide, was, whether the assurances, made by government, had been given with an evident intention of carrying them into effect? A consideration, also, of the particular steps which had been taken to fulfil these assurances, would be necessary to enable the House to judge of the sincerity of intention with which they had been advanced.

It was stated, in one of the resolutions now submitted to the House, that the Treasury

Bills, paid by the Bank, amounted to fifteen millions; but the question was not, what had or what had not been paid, but what was the amount of the outstanding debt, and what the means which government possessed to discharge it. Mr. Pitt felt that he laboured under peculiar disadvantage in stating,—but it was a disadvantage which no human foresight could possibly provide for,—that he had been very much disappointed in the unexpected amount, as well of the Bills drawn from the Continent, as of the sums drawn for to meet the exigencies of the war, in the West Indies, the precise extent of which he was even, at that moment, unable to state.—Therefore, when Mr. Grey contended, as an argument in favour of his own conclusions, that the expectations held out in the different Budgets, had seldom been fulfilled; he contended for that which could not be denied, and which was certainly a matter of great and serious concern; but he admitted, at the same time, that the financial statements were correct, founded, as they evidently were, on the probable estimates laid before the House. As a proof of the sincerity of the intention manifested by government, to reduce the advances, Mr. Pitt referred to a document brought forward by the Secret Committee, by which it appeared that the outstand-

ing Bills of Exchange were reduced, on the fifth of January, 1795, to £1,796,000; and, on the thirty-first of March, to £500,000.—That they were not kept at that low sum was imputable solely to the increase of the great and unavoidable expences which could not be forescen in the prosecution of the war. The Bills of Exchange actually paid by government between the fifth of January, 1795, and the fifth of January, 1796, amounted to no less than *eight millions*, while those which were outstanding did not exceed £500,000. He made this statement merely to convince the House of the sincerity of his assurances, that he would reduce the advances to government, and had only to lament that his most sanguine desires, and his constant exertions, to attain that object, had failed, from circumstances which he could neither anticipate nor controul. But so far were the Bank Directors from considering their advances to government to be prejudicial to their affairs, that, after their representations to him in November, on the danger of making them, they absolutely agreed to make them, in the subsequent month of July, and then advanced money on the Land and Malt duties, notwithstanding their previous remonstrances.

He made some observations on the con-

tradictory evidence of two of the Bank Directors, Mr. Raikes and Mr. Giles, respecting a conversation between them and himself, in which Mr. Giles asserted, that Mr. Pitt had promised that no future advances should be made to the Emperor, while Mr. Raikes positively stated, that the conversation had no relation whatever to future advances. In the first place, it was not to be conceived that the Minister would be guilty of such a gross breach of his duty, as to tie up his hands from acting as circumstances might require, in supporting our allies; and, in the next place, where such contradictory evidence had been delivered, a candid and upright judge would have scorned to make it the subject of a criminal charge. Mr. Grey, however, made it the foundation of one of *his* accusations; and it was directly, as Mr. Pitt observed, though no notice whatever had been given to him on that subject, pressed upon him as a specific ground of crimination, and he was to be censured for a breach of faith, in not considering himself bound to the performance of a condition with which he was wholly unacquainted.

In considering the remittances made to the Emperor, Mr. Pitt corrected one of the mistakes of Mr. Grey, who had taken it for granted that, because certain sums were ad-

vanced to government, Bank Notes must be issued to an equal amount with the total of those advances.—But this was by no means the fact. In 1783, the advances were little less than they were at the present period, yet the Notes in circulation, in the last month of 1783, did not exceed six millions. Since that period, the Notes in circulation had risen from six to between nine and ten millions. The various circulation of Notes, and the circuitous manner in which they passed through different hands, accounted for the competency of a small quantity of them to discharge demands of a superior amount. But it had been urged, that, if the advances had not been made, the Bank had been safe. If it were meant, by this, that, in such case, the Bank would have been able to wind up its affairs, Mr. Pitt did not consider that as a matter of safety; and he hoped it would not be so considered by any person who was seriously concerned for the prosperity and credit of the country. He declared his opinion, that the safety of the Bank consisted in giving vigour to the trade and commerce of the country, by diffusing a circulating medium, without the aid of which the nation would be unable to preserve its affluence and independence, and without which its dearest interests would be absolutely destroyed. He acknowledged, how-

ever, that it was a question of very great importance, how far a greater or smaller issue of paper was favourable to commerce.* Mr. Grey

* A great difference of opinion had obtained, on this very subject, between the Directors of the Bank, and other persons of great commercial knowledge. The former, in consequence of the alarms and embarrassments which they had experienced, had resolved, in 1796, to diminish their Notes in circulation, so as to make the demands upon them correspond more with the state of their cash. For several years previous to 1796, the average amount of Bank Notes in circulation was between ten and eleven millions, hardly ever falling below nine millions, and not often exceeding eleven millions. But at the latter end of 1796, and at the beginning of 1797, the amount was considerably less, and, on the twenty-fifth of February, 1797, it did not exceed *l.*8,640,250.

I had, indeed, been still lower in 1782, 1783, and 1784, but, at that time, the foreign commerce of the kingdom was not even one-half of what it was in 1796; of course there did not exist a necessity for the same quantity of a circulating medium. The late reduction of Bank Notes occasioned distress, in the commercial world, by limiting the discount of bills. The distress, indeed, was increased by the rate of interest being fixed, by law, at five per cent. when much higher interest might be obtained by the purchase of government securities. A decided opinion, however, was expressed by several persons, (examined by the Committee of Secrecy of the House of Lords,) of the inconvenience produced by the conduct of the Bank, in diminishing their Notes in circulation, and in restricting their discounts. It was maintained, that an increased quantity of Bank Notes, proportioned to the increased occasion for them, must tend rather to prevent than to promote a demand for Guineas; and that the principle which

had charged the Bank of England with departing from the character of simplicity and honesty which ought to distinguish all similar establishments, when they had not money sufficient to discharge all their out-standing Notes. Mr. Pitt, on the contrary, asserted, that if Banks were compelled to have, upon every unfounded and unforeseen alarm, a sufficient quantity of money to answer the demands which might possibly be made upon them, there would, at once, be an end to the principle upon which banking had been uniformly conducted. That principle he had always understood to be the employment of a circulating capital larger than the real capital.

must regulate the conduct of private Bankers in the amount of them, did not apply to the Bank of England. A great quantity of Notes were absolutely necessary for the circulation of the metropolis; and, in that respect, it was immaterial, in a public point of view, whether they were issued for advances made to government, or in discounts to private persons. An opinion was also expressed, that the resolution of the Bank to restrict their discounts had excited an alarm and distrust which led to an increase of the drain of their cash; and that it contributed also to the forced sale and depreciation of public securities, and to other embarrassments occasioned by an insufficient supply of Bank Notes and Cash; which supply had not kept pace with the demand arising from the employment and circulation of active capital, particularly for the last fifteen months.-----*See Report from the Committee of Secrecy appointed by the Lords.*

In reference to the allegation, that the money sent to the Emperor, and other foreign powers, had produced the Order in Council, of the twenty-sixth of February, Mr. Pitt observed, that, as it was established that there were a great number of other causes which might all have equally concurred to produce that event, it could not, with any degree of justice, be ascribed to that one alone. If it were established then, that an increased capital required an increased circulation, and that there was, at the same time, a diminution in the amount of country Bank Notes, which had occasioned a run on the Bank; if those, and many other causes, had been proved to have had a share in producing those circumstances which rendered the Order of Council necessary, Mr. Grey would find it impossible to persuade the House, that it was occasioned solely by remittances to the Emperor, even though it were to be admitted, that those remittances had carried out of the country a considerable quantity of Specie and Bullion.

There were many different theories of the balance of trade, but Mr. Pitt would not subscribe to any of them, upon however high authority they might stand, without previously submitting them to the test of his own judgment. Much as he respected the opinions of Adam Smith,

whose works had been quoted by Mr. Grey, he could not but dissent from several of the maxims which he had advanced. He thought him always ingenious, but sometimes injudicious. Instead, however, of going the length of Mr. Grey, Adam Smith had treated it as a vulgar opinion, that a number of millions sent out of the country during a war, was injurious to commerce.—Mr. Grey had observed, by way of admonishing the House, that if two events accompanied each other, it was not proper to assert, that one was the cause, and the other the effect;—Mr. Pitt availed himself of the admonition, and added that, though one event should be predicted to be the effect of another, it was neither just nor proper to conclude, merely because it so happened, that the prediction was founded in truth. The state of the country had been represented as most distressing; but the favourable state of the exchange, and the great increase of exports, demonstrated the fallacy of the representation. Indeed, it was a great consolation to reflect, that commerce had poured wealth into the country in a far greater proportion than the expences of the war had drawn it out. It was a fact not to be disputed, that the quantity of money in the country, at that time, was not less than the quantity possessed at the

beginning of the war.* After some observations of Mr. Fox, who repeated the assertions of Mr. Grey, the House divided, when the resolutions, proposed by the latter, were negatived, by *two hundred and six* votes against *sixty*.

The failure of this attempt did not discourage another member of the party from making an effort to produce the same effect. On the 19th of May, Alderman Combe, in avowed obedience to the orders of his constituents, moved the House of Commons, that an humble address should be presented to his Majesty, praying that he would be pleased to dismiss, from his councils, his present Ministers, as the best means of obtaining a speedy and honourable peace. In support of this curious motion, the Alderman briefly adverted to the origin of the war, imputing to the Ministers objects and designs which they had repeatedly disavowed; renewing against them the oft-repeated charge of insincerity in their negotiations; but chiefly resting on the triumphant argument, that, as they were hateful to the French, they never could be expected to make a favourable peace!—It was reserved for the present age, to make the strange discovery, that the best qualifica-

* Woodfall's Reports, May 16, 1797. Mr. Pitt's speech, p. 170.

tion for a British Minister was to be a favourite with the enemies of his country;—and that a man, who favoured French principles, justified the conduct of the French government, and condemned all the proceedings of the British Cabinet, in respect of the war, its object, its origin, and its progress, was most likely to make a peace, safe and honourable to Great Britain!—It might have occurred to a less enlightened politican than Mr. Combe, that, if a man of this description were sent to negotiate a peace with France, he would have some difficulty in resisting the most humiliating terms, when reminded, that the war, on the part of his country, had been, according to his own admission, most unnecessary, unprovoked, and unjust; a war undertaken to gratify the caprice of a Minister, to extinguish the light of freedom, which had just burst forth on the subjugated and enslaved inhabitants of the continent, and to favour the cause of that odious tyranny which laboured to keep mankind in chains.—He would be compelled to acknoweledge, that the nation which had acted so base a part, ought to be severely corrected for her folly and injustice; and that, therefore, she was bound to submit to the most rigorous terms which a victorious enemy could impose on her.—Mr. Combe, however, thought it a self-evident proposition,

that a Minister, who had dared to apply the most abusive language to the rebels and regicides of Republican France, and to devote their principles to execration, were alike incapable of managing the affairs of *this* country, and of concluding a peace with France, on terms that would be either honourable or advantageous to England!

This motion was seconded by Sir William Milner, and supported by Mr. Curwen, Mr. Michael Angelo Taylor, Mr. Nathaniel Jeffreys, and Mr. Sturt; and it was opposed by Mr. Hawkins Browne, Mr. Ellison, Mr. Wilbraham Bootle, Mr. Brandling, Mr. Pierrepoint, Mr. Burdon, Mr. Miles Peter Andrews, and Aldermen Curtis and Anderson. In the course of his philippic against Ministers, Mr. Curwen advanced the unconstitutional doctrine, that members of the House of Commons were bound to obey the directions of their immediate constituents; thereby betraying that gross ignorance of the constitutional character of a representative which has been before noticed and reproved in Mr. Combe. Neither the Ministers, nor any of the leading members of Opposition, took the smallest part in this debate, which terminated in a rejection of the motion, by two hundred and forty-two votes against fifty-nine.

In pursuance of the same object, which this and similar motions were calculated to promote, Mr. Fox, on the 23d of May, moved for a repeal of the two acts, which had passed the preceding year, for the better preservation of his Majesty's person and government against treasonable practices; and for the suppression of seditious meetings. The first of these acts, which continued to excite his heartfelt abhorrence,* he described as equally inconsistent with sound policy, and with the *tranquillity* and constitution of the realm.—He alluded to different acts which had passed in former periods of our history, in the reigns of Elizabeth, and of Charles the Second, for similar purposes, in order to show that they arose out of a consciousness that the conduct of the government was such as to provoke disaffection in the minds of the people.—In proof of this assertion, he remarked, that it was made highly penal to say, that Charles the Second was a Papist. "Why? Because, in truth, he was so."† His speech was inflammatory, as usual; and, in the course of it, he took an opportunity of threatening the Scottish judges with future punishment, for having banished the patriots of Caledonia to the inhos-

* Woodfall's Reports, May 23, p. 218.

† Idem. Ibid. p. 219.

pitable clime of New South Wales; and of pronouncing a pompous eulogy on the virtues of Mr. Gerald, who had ended his days in that place of exile. How would the Whigs of old have reprobated such language in a British House of Commons!—With the example of France before him, Mr. Fox was not ashamed to assert, that no political opinions could be dangerous to a State, if they were suffered to be freely and openly promulgated!*

The motion was opposed by Serjeant Adair, who defended the acts from the foul aspersions cast upon them by Mr. Fox; and in allusion to his assertion respecting the trials in Scotland, that the persons convicted in that country had been sent to Botany Bay, for crimes arising out of an excess of love for the principles of the constitution, he asked whether Skirving, one of them, had not been Secretary to the British Convention? and whether it was excess of love for the principles of the British Constitution, which had led these men to adopt the language, and the forms, of that French Convention who had murdered their King, trampled upon the rights of the people, abolished the Christian religion, and set at defiance every principle of humanity and of justice?—Was it love for the constitu-

* Id. Ibid. p. 225.

tion that induced them to adopt a resolution to resist acts of the Legislature which composed that constitution. He exposed the absurdity of supposing, that seditious Conventions, at a private meeting, would have as dangerous an effect as inflammatory harangues in popular assemblies.—He observed, that the alarm which the proceedings of certain societies had excited had been very great, and that the numerous meetings, which had been held at different places, went to objects little short of destroying the constitution, consisting of King, Lords, and Commons.—*The consequence of these proceedings had been an attempt upon the sacred person of his Majesty.** The good which the measures, then adopted, had produced, was obvious from existing facts. They who before were turbulent, were now, at least, quiet. They whom nothing could content, were prevented from propagating their mischievous doctrines. The Serjeant contended, that the repeal of these salutary acts, at present, which practically had been found to produce so much advantage, and were practically attended with no bad consequence, would be madness.

It was observed, by Colonel Fullarton, that,

* Woodfall's Reports, Serjeant Adair's speech, May 23, p 231.

from what he had seen of the public conduct of Mr. Fox, he perceived, that the present motion was only an extension of that political web which he had been weaving for four years past, in which he had laboured to disgrace the country abroad, and to divide it at home. He had reprobated the war, when the French were already in arms against their country, and after they had threatened to rear the standard of their Republic on the ruins of the tower. He had censured the alien bill; he had ridiculed, as visionaries, all who had expressed alarm for the safety of the constitution. In every instance, his language had been the same. When it was necessary to guard them against the designs of those whose hostility to the constitution had been proved, he had resisted every measure brought forward for its defence, and had proposed to perform wonders by conciliation; like the musician, who conceived the idea of appeasing all the feuds and discords of mankind by the irresistible charms of harmony.*

The motion was further opposed by Mr. Eastcourt, Lord Morpeth, Mr. Ellison, Major Elford, Sir Richard Glynn, Mr. Cholmondeley, and Mr. Pierrepoint; while none but Mr. Fox, himself, spoke in its defence. Two hundred and sixty voted against it, and fifty-two for it.

* Idem. Ibid. p. 234.

A few days previous to this discussion, Mr. Harrison, who had formerly moved for the imposition of partial taxes upon persons who held public situations, in addition to the taxes which they paid in common with the rest of their fellow-subjects, moved for the institution of an inquiry, with a view to ascertain, whether some relief to the burdens of the people, or provision, for further expence, might not be obtained by the reduction of useless places, sinecure offices, exorbitant fees, and other modes of retrenchment, in the expenditure of the public money. The speech, with which Mr. Harrison favoured the House upon the present occasion, differed but little from his former speeches on similar topics; and contained nothing worthy of historical record. It was answered, at considerable length, by Mr. Pitt, who opposed it, because no specific grounds had been alledged as its basis, and because it held out a delusion to the public, and could be productive of no good. Mr. Harrison had not pointed out any of the abuses which were said to exist in the performance of duties, or in payments for services not done for the public. It was very easy to give credit out of doors to the reports of abuses in sinecure places, a subject as much mistaken as any other of a public nature.—Mr Pitt most properly reprobated the injustice of

the idea, that the abilities and labour, devoted to the service of the public, should not be paid as well, and to the full as liberally, by the public, as those which were applied, in private life, to the interest of individuals, and which were rewarded by individual compensation. He entered into an examination of the various offices to which the motion referred, in order to shew that they were, generally speaking, not fit objects of retrenchment. As to those offices which related to state duties, many of them were attended with considerable expence for the maintenance of that appearance, and style of living, which it was necessary for those who held them to preserve. In the various offic connected with the army, the navy, and t. revenue, the wages received were not higher than those which might be earned by an equal exertion in private life from individuals. There were certainly offices of another description, of less business, and with fewer duties, attached to them; but it was to be observed, that they arose out of our ancient manners, and were, in fact, the remnants of former times, attached to the splendour of Majesty, and attendant on the dignity of Monarchy. Such offices had ever existed; and such had been the custom of all countries which had been governed by Monarchs; it had been interwoven in our constitution; and

formed an appendage to our mixed government; not for the display of idle parade; not for the loose gratification of idle vanity; but sanctioned by the authority of our ancestors, and continued for the dignified consistency of appearance in the King of a great and free people.—Mr. Pitt then adverted to offices of a more invidious nature—sinecure places,—which, notwithstanding the ridicule and severity with which some members were disposed to treat them, were capable of defence on rational grounds. He briefly stated the principle on which they stood.—They stood on the invariable custom of the country, and were recognized by the solemn decisions of Parliament. He supposed it would not be denied, that the fair principle of honourable remuneration had ever been held a sacred consideration; nor yet would it be contested, that a provision, and a retreat, for a life devoted to the public service, had ever been deemed a just and irresistible motive for conferring permanent rewards.—On this ground, Mr. Pitt examined the question of sinecure places, and contended that, as the necessity of rewarding public services was universally admitted, it would not be possible to devise a means of conferring such rewards, which would be subject to less abuse, or would excite less discontent.—He reminded the House,

with what caution, and circumspection, Mr. Burke's memorable plan of economical reform was carried into effect; no change, nor modification, whatever, was effected, without the aid of incontrovertible evidence, and the assistance of positive fact; whereas Mr. Harrison's project was vague, comprehensive, and indefinite; without any fixed or specific object of pursuit, and without any marked principle to act upon. The tellers of the Exchequer, and several other offices, were retained, and recognized, by the resolution of Parliament, as necessary to be continued, and after a due consideration of the nature and tenure of sinecure places.

Mr. Pitt maintained, that sinecure offices were given in the nature of a freehold tenure. Parliament had expressly declared, that they would respect them as freehold property. And if, in answer to this solemn declaration, it was urged that Parliament might rescind their former resolutions, they might, by parity of reasoning, destroy every kind of property in the country. Mr. Pitt had already moved for a general investigation of the whole financial system of the country, with a view of ascertaining a plan for controlling the public expenditure; and the Committee, appointed for that purpose, would, of course, include in their researches every practicable scheme of reform.

Mr. Harrison's motion, therefore, was as unnecessary as it was ill-timed;—for which reason Mr. Pitt moved the previous question.

The original motion was supported by Mr. Sheridan, who said every thing which his ingenuity suggested on the abuses of office, on the necessity of economy, and retrenchment; and on the propriety, in men of superior minds, of setting a *pure* example to the people;—subjects on which he spoke so feelingly, that it was naturally supposed, by the country gentlemen, he spoke from *experience*. In his eccentric course, however, he wandered a little aside from the strict path of truth; and, in a personal attack on Mr. George Rose, charged him with holding places to the amount of £10,000 per annum; which drew from that gentleman a correction rather more severe than courtly. Indeed, Mr. Rose accused Mr. Sheridan of wilful and deliberate falsehood; he expressed his astonishment that Mr. Sheridan should renew assertions which, three years before, had experienced a formal contradiction from him; and he very justly remarked, that if he were not inclined, at that time, to take his word for the truth of his declarations, he had had sufficient opportunity since, of which it was his duty to avail himself, to make such inquiries as must have dispelled every doubt on the subject. Mr.

Rose then proceeded solemnly to assure the House, that, of the offices which Mr. Sheridan had asserted were possessed by him, *three* he did not hold; two of them he had resigned a considerable time before, and one he never had held. The income of one was much less than Mr. Sheridan had stated it to be; and the income of the other two had been monstrously exaggerated. He acquired his office of Clerk to the House of Lords, by a grant from the Crown, in consequence of an address from that House, which stated him to be deserving of it, on account of services which he had rendered.

Mr. Rose expressed a wish to know, whether it was less honourable in him to possess a sinecure place than it was in Mr. Fox, who, during the time he was in administration, held three sinecure places.—One of these was the Clerkship of the Pells in Ireland, which was originally granted to Lord Holland, with the reversion to Mr. Fox.

Mr. Sheridan excused himself, by saying, that he had stated facts as he *understood* them to be;—but it is not a sufficient apology for a falsehood, that the person who advances it understood it to be true;—a man of honour and integrity will not assert, as a positive fact, any thing which he does not *know* to be true. The personal reflections, however, which

Mr. Sheridan, according to his usual mode of debate, had introduced into the discussion, were further extended by Mr. Fox, who delivered his sentiments with great warmth on the subject. He charged Mr. Pitt, and Lord Grenville, with providing themselves with sinecure places, while they were loading the people with an accumulated weight of burthens. This charge, as it affected Mr. Pitt, was most unjust. Never did an interested motive pollute the mind of that upright statesman! Mr. Fox well knew, that when a sinecure place, of considerable value, had become vacant, and Mr. Pitt's friends, knowing the confined state of his circumstances, pressed him to take it himself, as all former Ministers had done, and the father of Mr. Fox among others, he steadily refused; and gave it to Colonel Barrè, the friend of Mr. Fox, on condition that he should resign a pension which had been granted him;—by which the public gained three thousand a year. He afterwards, indeed, accepted the office of Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports, on the death of Lord Guildford; but this could not, in strictness, be termed a sinecure, since there are some duties, though certainly few, annexed to it. Be that as it may, let the page of history be searched, and not a Minister will be found who was better entitled to signal and

permanent rewards from the public. Mr. Pitt, had forsaken a lucrative profession, in which his knowledge and his talents peculiarly qualified him not merely to shine, but to attain to distinguished pre-eminence, and to acquire a splendid fortune, in order to devote his time and abilities to the public. The services which he had rendered to the public, whatever Mr. Fox and his present associates might think of them, the nation at large had felt, appreciated, and acknowledged. And there was not a man of liberal sentiment in the kingdom, who thought them too highly rewarded, by the place which Mr. Fox, with a littleness of soul, which, with all his failings, he seldom displayed; and with an inconsistency of principle, but too common with him, now reproached him with having taken.

Mr. Fox next alluded to the removal of Mr. Aust from the Foreign Office, though he was eminently qualified for the situation, merely to provide for Mr. Canning, who could not do the business of the office till he was instructed in it by Mr. Aust.* He then attacked Mr. Rose for receiving the salary of Clerk to the House of Lords, while the duty was performed by another; and for securing

* Woodfall's Reports, March 13, p. 347.

the reversion for his son. It was, he said, most scandalous and enormous.* These last words drew a severe reply from Mr. Rose, who observed, that he deemed it no more scandalous in him to obtain that reversion for his son, than it was in the father of Mr. Fox to obtain the reversion of two patent places for him.—Nor did he believe that there would be any thing more scandalous in the mode by which the reversion might be disposed of, than there was in the way those other reversions had been disposed of by Mr. Fox; who, it was understood, had sold them to pay a gaming debt. The interposition of the Speaker, at length, put an end to there personal altercations, so unworthy of a Legislative Assembly. But Mr. Canning deemed it proper to prevent the House from being misled by Mr. Fox's statement respecting him, by informing them that the public had not been encumbered with any additional expence on his account. Mr. Aust had been appointed to other offices more lucrative; but *his* appointment had added no new expence to the public burthens. If sordid views had been his object, he would rather have accepted those offices which Mr. Aust then held, than the station which he himself occupied.† The

* Idem. Ibid. p. 348. † Id. Ibid. p. 350.

previous question, moved by Mr. Pitt, was carried by one hundred and sixty-nine votes against seventy-seven.

During the prevalence of these party-contentions, while the leaders of opposition, instead of uniting in defence of their country against an inveterate and formidable enemy, were intent on producing divisions, by exciting an odium against the government, and by incessant complaints of imaginary grievances, an evil of a most serious nature, which struck at the very vitals of our national independence and safety, had been secretly spreading, and had reached to the fulness of maturity. A spirit of discontent had been artfully engendered, and very widely diffused, among the seamen in our fleets. Several of the disaffected Irish had entered the navy; and persons who were not bred to the sea, but who were placed in superior stations in life, had enlisted in the service, for the diabolical purpose of infecting the minds of the sailors with revolutionary principles. It was easy for such persons to discover any grievances, real or imaginary, under which the seamen might labour, or suppose themselves to labour; and it was no difficult matter to magnify these into copious sources of discontent. The projectors of this dreadful scheme proceeded with such consummate art, that the

train was actually laid, and the explosion ready to take place, before the smallest suspicion of a mine being prepared was entertained, either by the Admiralty, or by the officers themselves. In the months of February and March, indeed, several petitions, for increase of wages, had been transmitted to Lord Howe, by the sailors of different ships, which excited his Lordship's attention, from the singular circumstance of the uniformity of language, sentiment, and writing, which proved them all to be the production of one person. He made inquiries of the commanding officer at Portsmouth, but was informed, that not the smallest discontent had appeared in the fleet. And the Admiralty, to whom his Lordship sent the petitions, seemed to think lightly of them, and no further notice was taken. On the return of the Channel-fleet to Portsmouth, a secret correspondence was settled, and maintained between all the ships, of which it was composed; and, at length, an unanimous agreement was entered into by the whole of the crews,—that no ship should lift an anchor till they had obtained a full and complete redress of grievances. In pursuance of this agreement, when Lord Bridport, on the fifteenth of April, gave the signal of preparation for sea, instead of obeying it, the crew of the Queen-Charlotte

gave three cheers, the signal for uniting, which were echoed through the fleet.

Every effort of the officers to quell this mutinous spirit proved fruitless. The system was formed;—the seamen became masters of the fleet;—two delegates from each ship met in the Admiral's cabin; an oath of fidelity was administered to every sailor, and death was the settled consequence of desertion from the common cause.

On the eighteenth of April, the mutinous delegates drew up, and signed, a petition to the House of Commons, and another to the Admiralty. In the first of these, they reminded the House, that their wages was fixed in the reign of Charles the Second, and that, although all the necessaries of life had increased, since that period, at least thirty per cent. they had not received any augmentation of pay;—on which account they were not able to make a proper provision for their families. They expressed their jealousy at the augmented pay of the army, and the increase of the out-pensioners of Chelsea College; while they remained neglected, and the out-pensioners of Greenwich had only seven pounds per annum. These grievances they recommended to the attention of the House in general terms.

In their petition to the Admiralty, they

entered into a more detailed statement of their grievances, and preferred specific demands, and assumed a tone of greater decision. They asserted, that "their worth to the nation," and their laborious industry in defence of their country, deserved better encouragement than any which they had experienced. But they professed to advert to their "Good Services," only to put the Nation and the Admiralty in mind of the respect which was due to them, and disavowed all intention of forsaking the cause of the British Crown. After referring to the insufficiency of their pay, they stated their demands under five heads:—I. That they should have more and better provisions; and that the same *measures* might be used in the Navy as were used in the Merchant service.—II. That no flour should be served while in harbour, or in a British port.—III. That better care should be taken of the sick, in respect of attendance, and necessaries; and that the latter should be secured from embezzlement.—IV. That they might have liberty to go on shore, when in harbour, and after their return from sea, within certain boundaries; which they considered as "a natural request, and congenial to the heart of man;" and certainly to them, whom the Admiralty made "the boast of being the guardians of the land."—And,

V. That the pay of men wounded in action should be continued until they should be cured and discharged.

Such was the substance of their claims, which appear to have nothing unreasonable, or improper, in themselves; though certainly the mode of preferring them was most reprehensible. The Ministers, and the Admiralty, were reduced to the most unpleasant situation; and had, indeed, only a choice of difficulties. On the one hand, to refuse compliance with the demands of men, who were in possession of our fleet, would be to incur danger of which it was impossible to foresee the consequences, or to ascertain the extent.—And on the other, the danger of establishing a fatal precedent, by yielding to requisitions, enforced by armed men, who set the lawful authority of their officers at defiance, and were in a state of active mutiny, was almost equally dangerous. The difficulty was further increased, in an extreme degree, by the peculiar circumstances of the period at which the insurrection occurred. We were in the midst of a war with a vigilant and desperate enemy, who not only threatened to invade our country, but to destroy our constitution, and to subvert our liberties and laws. The intelligence of these discontents could not fail to invigorate their efforts, and

to accelerate their schemes, for the execution of this favourite object.—And, with the fleet in possession of the mutineers, there would be no means of resisting their attempt to effect a landing on our coasts. While this circumstance increased our danger, it aggravated the guilt of the offenders. The public were greatly, and justly, alarmed; and the First Lord of the Admiralty, Earl Spencer, with two other of the Lords, Lord Arden and Admiral Young, had repaired to Portsmouth on the first information of the mutiny.

Yielding to the imperious necessity of the case, these commissioners immediately answered the petition of the seamen; and instructed the Commander of the Fleet, Lord Bridport, to inform them, that, having the strongest desire to attend to all their complaints, and to grant them every just and reasonable redress, they had taken their grievances into their serious consideration, and had resolved to recommend to his Majesty, to propose to Parliament to increase the wages of seamen, in the following proportions:—To add four shillings per month to the wages of petty officers and able seamen.—Three shillings per month to the wages of ordinary seamen; and two shillings per month to the wages of landmen.—They had also resolved, that wounded seamen should con-

tinue to receive their pay until their wounds were healed, or until, being declared unserviceviceable, they should receive a pension, or be received into the Royal Hospital at Greenwich. The commissioners of the Admiralty declared, that their reliance on the good disposition, loyalty, and courage, of the seamen, had induced them the more readily to adopt these resolutions, in order that they might have, as early as possible, an opportunity of proving the sincerity of their professions, by returning to their duty, as it might be necessary that the fleet should speedily put to sea, to meet the enemy.

These deliberating delegates of mutiny were not, however, to be so easily satisfied.— The last appeal to their patriotism, far from producing the intended effect, only served to raise their spirits, and to increase their pretensions. Emboldened by the success of the mode of application which they had adopted; and feeling their power, they demurred to the terms proposed by the Admiralty.— The next day, April the nineteenth, they sent a formal reply, in which they demanded the abolition of the distinction between seamen and landmen; and that no other distinction should be made, than that between able and ordinary seamen. They required, that the pay of the marines should be

increased as well as their own; that the pensions at Greenwich should be raised to ten pounds; and that, in order to create an adequate fund for the purpose, every seaman in the merchant service should pay a shilling a month, instead of sixpence; and that the same regulation should be extended to the seamen in the service of the East India Company. They renewed their demand, in respect of provisions; and, lastly, declared their determination *not to lift an anchor* until all these grievances had been redressed, and an act of indemnity passed. And they concluded, in the language of revolt, "*And the grievances of particular ships* MUST BE *redressed.*"

On the twentieth, Lord Bridport was instructed to inform the seamen, that the Board of Admiralty being desirous to grant them every request that could, with any degree of reason, be complied with, had resolved to recommend it to the King, that an addition of pay of five shillings and sixpence per month should be made to the wages of petty officers and seamen, which would make the wages of able seamen one shilling per day, clear of all deductions; an addition of four shillings and sixpence per month to the wages of every ordinary seamen; and an addition of three shillings and sixpence to the wages of every landman; and that none

of the allowances made to the marines when on shore should be dropped on their being embarked on board any of his Majesty's ships; and that they had also resolved, that all seamen, marines, and others, serving in his Majesty's ships, should have the full allowance of provisions, without any deductions for leakage or waste. The Admiral was ordered to communicate this determination to the Captain of each ship in the fleet, who was to inform his crew, that, should they be insensible to the very liberal offers now made to them, and persist in their present disobedience, they must no longer expect to enjoy those benefits to which, by their former good conduct, they were entitled;—in such case, all the men, at that time on board the fleet, at Spithead, should be incapable of receiving smart-money, or pension, from the Chest of Chatham, or of being admitted into the Royal Hospital at Greenwich; and that they must be answerable for the dreadful consequences which would necessarily result from their continuing to transgress the rules of the service, in open violation of the laws of their country.—On the other hand, perfect forgiveness, and oblivion, of all that had passed, was promised to every ship's company, who, within one hour after these resolutions should have been communicated to them, should

return to their duty in every particular, and should cease to hold further intercourse with any man who might continue in a state of disobedience and mutiny.

But even this concession, ample and liberal as it was, not proving sufficient to satisfy the mutineers, on the twenty-first of April, three Admirals, Gardner, Colpoys, and Poole, went on board the Queen-Charlotte to talk to the delegates, who explicitly told them, that they would agree to nothing which should not be sanctioned by Parliament, and guaranteed by the King's Proclamation. Admiral Gardner was so enraged at this mutinous and seditious declaration, that he seized one of the delegates by the collar, and swore he would have them all hanged, and every fifth man throughout the fleet.—This honest impulse of indignation, however, had nearly cost him his life. After this interview, the crews of the different ships proceeded to load the guns, and to adopt every measure of preparation, either for offensive or defensive operations.

On the twenty-second of April, the delegates again addressed the Lords of the Admiralty, expressed their gratitude for their increase of pay, but declared their final resolution, not to lift an anchor till every grievance, which they had stated, had been fully redressed, and

the King's pardon obtained. At length, it was deemed expedient to comply with their demands, and the Royal pardon for all their past transgressions was accordingly issued. They then returned to their duty; but, on the seventh of May, they again became mutinous from doubts, as they declared, that the promises made to them would not be fulfilled. Lord Howe was then sent to them, and he soon succeeded in quelling their groundless suspicions, in bringing them back to their duty, and in restoring them to order and discipline. The fleet at Plymouth, which had followed the example of that at Portsmouth in disobedience, followed is also in its return to order.

The additional yearly expence, occasioned by these concessions, amounted to £436,000; and for such a portion of this sum as would meet the expence for the remainder of the present year, Mr. Pitt moved, in the House of Commons, on the ninth of May. He then deprecated all discussion as only calculated to produce irritation. Indeed this suggestion was so obviously proper, that it could not be conceived that a difference of opinion could subsist upon the subject. Mr. Fox and Mr. Sheridan, however, thought otherwise, and exerted themselves to provoke a debate, by accusing the Minister of having

been guilty of criminal neglect, in not sooner submitting the measure to the House. When it is considered, that only three weeks had elapsed from the day on which the first appearance of a mutinous disposition had manifested itself, to the period of the present application, the frivolity and injustice of such a charge must be evident. The House paid no attention to it, and the vote passed without a dissentient voice. Indeed, as Mr. Pitt had been already accused by the party, of having been the author of the attack on the King in the park, he might think himself very fortunate, on the present occasion, in having escaped the charge of exciting the mutiny in the Fleet. The Opposition, however, were resolved to criminate him, in some way or other, and, therefore, the next day, Mr. Whitbread, who concluded a speech in which he said a great deal about ministerial guilt, and condign punishment, formally moved, that Mr. Pitt, in having so long delayed to present the estimate of the sum necessary for defraying the expences of an increase of pay, and also for the proposed issue of a full allowance of provisions to the seamen and marines of his Majesty's navy, had been guilty of a gross breach of duty, and deserved the censure of the House. It was clearly proved by Mr. Pitt that no delay which could have been avoided had taken place. And he also stated

absurdity of making him responsible for a transaction with which he had less concern than with almost any other public business. This objection induced Mr. Whitbread to alter his motion, so as to direct his censure against the whole administration collectively; although, with equal absurdity and inconsistency, he declared, at the same time, that he directed his censure, and would therefore point his accusation, against Mr. Pitt.* A debate ensued, which ended in a rejection of the proposed motion, by 237 votes against 63.

Hopes were now entertained, that order was perfectly restored in the navy, and that no further disturbance would occur. But scarcely had the public time for mutual congratulations on their narrow escape from the most imminent danger, before their satisfaction was again interrupted, by the intelligence of a fresh mutiny having broken out on board the ships at the Nore. On the twenty-second of May, the crews took possession of their respective ships, and betrayed a much more malignant disposition than had been manifested by their comrades at Portsmouth. The mutiny here assumed a more serious and alarming aspect. The demands of the men were

* Woodfall's Parliamentary Reports, May 10th, p. 81.

more extensive in their nature, and urged with more insolence and decision. On the morning of the sixth of June, the ships at the Nore were joined by four others of the line, and one sloop, forming part of Lord Duncan's fleet. Delegates were chosen, and a man, of the name of Richard Parker, who had received some education, which had improved parts naturally good, and given a greater degree of decision to a character naturally bold and resolute, was selected as their chief.

Admiral Buckner, who commanded at the Nore, was directed by the Admiralty to inform the men that their demands were such as the rules of the service would not allow them to comply with; but that, if they would immediately return to their duty, they should receive the King's pardon for their past misconduct. This offer was rejected, and Parker informed the Admiral that the seamen were resolved to keep possession of the fleet, until the Lords of the Admiralty had repaired to the Nore, and redressed their grievances. Lord Spencer, Lord Arden, and Admiral Young, accordingly, repaired to Sheerness, without loss of time, and held a board, at which Parker and the other delegates attended;—but their behaviour was so outrageously indecent, that there appeared not the smallest prospect of reducing them to obedience, by reasoning and persuasion. A

proclamation was now issued, offering pardon to all such as should immediately return to their duty; and the buoys were ordered to be removed from the mouth of the Thames, and the adjoining coast, by way of precaution, to increase the difficulty of sailing away with the ships; and as the mutineers had manifested an intention of bombarding Sheerness, adequate means of resistance were provided, and furnaces, for heating balls, were kept in constant readiness.

The mutineers, meanwhile, proceeded to acts of open rebellion;—they stopped two store ships in the river and seized their cargoes; moored four of their ships across the Thames to intercept all vessels, on their way to and from London; and published their design of cutting off all communication with the capital, as a means of enforcing compliance with their demands. But after persisting, for some time, in these mutinous proceedings, they found that not only the community at large, but their own comrades at Plymouth and Portsmouth, reprobated their conduct, and called for their punishment. Disheartened alike, by the knowledge of this fact, and by the firmness of Government in resisting their claims, great divisions took place among them, and several ships forsook the confederacy and returned to

their duty. The flag of rebellion, which had hitherto been kept flying on board the Sandwich, was lowered; and order and tranquillity were happily restored without violence, except between some of the ships' crews, among whom a division of sentiment produced some contest and bloodshed. Parker, the ringleader of the mutineers, was seized, with some of the most active of the delegates; and afterwards tried, on board the Neptune. After a most patient and minute investigation, Parker was condemned, and suffered the sentence of the law. Some of the culprits were sentenced to milder punishments; but many others, who were condemned to die, were kept in prison till after the victory obtained by Admiral Duncan over the French fleet, when his Majesty issued a general pardon.

During the existence of the mutiny, his Majesty had communicated the event to Parliament, by a Royal Message, on the first of June, in which he recommended it to their consideration to make more effectual provision for the prevention and punishment of all traitorous attempts to excite sedition and mutiny in the navy; or to withdraw any part of his forces, by sea or land, from their duty and allegiance to him, and from that obedience and discipline which were so important to the

prosperity and the safety of the British empire. This Message was taken into consideration the following day, in the House of Commons, when the address moved by Mr. Pitt received the unanimous sanction of the House. On this occasion, Mr. Sheridan stood forward, with true English spirit, in support of the address, and in reprobation of the conduct of the mutineers.—He had, at first, been induced to think that they had acted under the impulse of momentary delusion and mistake; but their subsequent and continued conduct had convinced him, that something more than delusion had operated on their minds, and that a rooted spirit of disobedience had taken place of those manly and loyal sentiments with which they had been, on former occasions, constantly animated. If there were, indeed, a rot in the wooden walls of old England, our decay could not be very distant. The question, as it evidently appeared to his view, was not about this, or that concession, but whether the country should be laid prostrate at the feet of France? It was, in fact, a matter of no moment, whether it was laid prostrate at the feet of Monarchical or of Republican France; for still the event would be equally fatal, equally destructive.*—*O! si sic omnia!*—Had Mr. Sheridan's

* Woodfall's Reports, June 2, p. 432.

eloquence been always exerted in so worthy, so patriotic a cause, with what pleasure, what pride, would the historian record its beauties and effects?

After the address was carried, Mr. Pitt moved for leave to bring in a bill for the better prevention and punishment of all traitorous attempts to excite sedition and mutiny in his Majesty's service; or to withdraw any part of his Majesty's forces, by sea or land, from their duty and allegiance to him, and from that obedience and discipline which are so important to the prosperity and safety of the British empire. He entered into some details, in order to prove the existence of a settled design to produce that which it was the immediate object of this bill to prevent and punish;—of one active, uniform, and wide-extended, plan of sedition to seduce his Majesty's forces from their duty and allegiance. The discontents did not originate with any single individual; they were not confined to one corner of the kingdom; nor contracted within one circle of complaint; but they had manifested themselves in many detached parts, were working, at the same time, and in different places, on the same principles, and branched out into so many fresh ramifications of complaint, that no person could foresee where they would end. Many and various had been the attempts to excite this dis-

affection, by false, insidious, and calumniating means, sometimes provoking rebellion, by emissaries at secret hours, sometimes by misrepresentations and other artifices, and at others by dispersing hand-bills wherever opportunity presented itself, or any expectation of success in their pursuits could be indulged, to detach the soldiers also from their duty; so that the engines of sedition had been no less busily and unremittingly persevering on shore, where, to the honour of the soldiery, they had failed in their effects, than in the navy, where they had unfortunately prevailed. Here, then, it was necessary to connect the discontents on board the fleet with the other species of sedition on shore, to pronounce them to be the operations of one fatal and too well digested system, for that they were not the spontaneous combinations of the seamen, that they were not the effects of accident, nor the effusion of one solitary and unconnected discontent, was demonstrated by the conformity of transactions at Newcastle, at Nottingham, at Maidstone, at Canterbury, at Salisbury, and at many other places where the same species of hand-bills had been scattered and diffused, accompanied by rumours, echoed and re-echoed, of the most false and scandalous nature, and where, in some unhappy instances, a few deluded, or evil-minded, people had set the

some melancholy example. A more studied system could not offer itself to the thought of any man; a more practicable plan of treason could never be attempted to be carried into execution. From such specimens, therefore, it was evident, the sedition was extensive enough to prove it to be systematic; and dangerous enough to make precaution requisite.*

Mr. Pitt made some judicious observations on the origin and nature of our penal laws, which, in their present state, were incompetent to recognize such machinations and to punish such delinquents as these; and, consequently, to deter men from the commission of such offences. Look at the statute laws, their origin, and extent. Had they ever endeavoured to search out every possible offence, and to provide for its prevention and punishment?—Certainly not. The statute laws of this country were not the result of an original, deliberative, systematic, code, but the natural effect of the commission of crimes, arising from their frequency and heinousness, and proportioning the penalties accordingly. They grew up from the offences which they afterwards controlled, and their character and com-

* Woodfall's Reports, Mr. Pitt's Speech, June 2, p. 438, 439.

plection shewed them to be the produce of different periods. What then, he asked, would be the principle of any one's argument, who should contend that, because no particular law, nor any particular penalties, had been yet provided by the legislature, none should be provided?—His argument would, in such a case, apply just as much, if he were to contend that no law or punishment should be in force against parricide, because, by referring to the statute books, he might find, that there was a time when no such law or penalty existed.

The bill passed through its various stages, in both Houses, with a degree of expedition, suited to the emergency which called for it.—By this law, all persons, who should endeavour to seduce either soldiers or sailors from their duty, or instigate them to mutinous practices, or commit any act of mutiny, or form any mutinous assemblies, should be deemed a felon; and, on conviction, suffer death. This was a temporary law, limited in duration to one month after the commencement of the next session of Parliament. Another bill was passed immediately after, the object of which was to restrain all intercourse between the discontented crews of the ships at the Nore, and the people on shore, and for the suppression of mutiny and rebellion on board those ships. This bill, also,

passed very speedily into a law. It annexed the punishment of felony to the act of holding any intercourse with the ships then in a state of mutiny, after a certain proclamation should have been issued and read in the dock-yards; and it deprived those sailors, who, after the date of that proclamation, should not return to their duty, of all arrears of pay and allowances, and of all benefit from Greenwich Hospital, and the Chest at Chatham. After the additional allowance made to the seamen, (and that part of it which related to provisions, was far from being necessary, as it was notorious, after it had been granted, that the portion of bread allowed was greater than the men could consume*) it would have been equally impolitic and unjust, not to admit the application of the same reasons to the army. The soldiers had, during this trying period, conducted themselves in a most exemplary manner, resisting every attempt to seduce them from their duty, and bringing those who made such attempts to

*. I saw a letter from an active and intelligent officer in the navy, (a post captain) soon after the mutiny, in which it was stated, that the superabundance of bread delivered to the men, in consequence of the new regulations, was such, that they could not eat it, but threw a great deal of it overboard; so that a quantity of bread was frequently seen in the wakes of the different ships.

punishment;---they had, therefore, every possible claim to an increase of pay; which was, accordingly, proposed by the Secretary of War, and unanimously adopted by Parliament.

In the interval, between the different discussions on these topics of primary importance, Mr. Grey made another effort to persuade the House to adopt a plan of Parliamentary Reform, which he submitted to them on the 26th of May. The substance of this project was to increase the county members from ninety-two to one hundred and thirteen;---and to change, or rather to extend, the qualification of electors, from freeholders to copy-holders, and leaseholders paying a certain rent. All other members he proposed to be returned, in future, by householders alone; by the adoption of which proposal, it was evident, all the exclusive rights of corporate bodies, respecting the election of representatives, would be destroyed. He suggested also the propriety of altering the duration of Parliaments from seven years to three. The subject had been so frequently discussed as to leave little room for novelty of argument. One only point, pressed by Mr. Grey, requires notice here. He accused Mr. Pitt of having neglected, when in power, the promises which he had made, in respect of the question of Parliamentary Reform,

when out of power.* Nothing could be more unfounded than this charge; for it has been shewn, that Mr. Pitt, after he came into power, moved the question of Parliamentary Reform, though, at a subsequent period, he saw reason to change his opinion on the subject, and candidly explained both the change itself, and the reason on which it was founded, to the House. He could not, therefore, be charged with a breach of promise, without manifest injustice, and a palpable violation of truth.

Mr. Grey's motion was seconded by Mr. Erskine. Mr. Pitt, in an answer of some length, vindicated his own consistency, and deprecated reform, at the present crisis, as only calculated to open the way to revolution. Mr. Fox supported the motion; and, in a very long speech, took a comprehensive view of all the objections which had ever been opposed to similar propositions for a reform in Parliament, which to him appeared necessary to restore to the people rights of which they had been robbed, and to preserve the constitution from ruin. Ninety-two members concurred in opinion with Mr. Grey, and two hundred and fifty-six condemned his proposals.

* Woodfall's Reports, Mr. Grey's speech, May 26th, p. 266.

In the House of Lords, a formal attack was made upon Ministers, by the Duke of Bedford, who had adopted all the opinions of Mr. Fox, respecting their principles, their abilities, and their conduct; and who laboured, though in vain, to impress the House with the same sense of them which he entertained himself. He entered into a long review of their proceedings, from the commencement of the war, and imputed to them every disaster which the Allies had sustained, and every calamity which Europe had experienced.—His Grace, in short, considered them as despicable in talents; impotent in resources; and wicked in intention. Such were the sum and substance of his speech! A stranger, who had heard his philippic, might have been induced to believe, that his Grace had mistaken the place in which he was speaking, and supposed that he was delivering an oration in one of the French Councils, and was aiming his attacks at the Ministers and Directors of the Republic. Consistently with the sentiments which he had avowed, the Duke moved an address to the King, beseeching him to dismiss such unworthy Ministers from his Councils. The House rejected the motion, which comprehended various objects connected with this main point, by *ninety-one* votes against *fourteen!*

During the session, a bill had passed the Lower House, to allow Roman Catholics, and Protestant Dissenters, to act as officers in the Supplementary Militia. But when it was introduced, at the close of the session, to the House of Peers, it was opposed by Lord Kenyon, and the Bishop of Rochester, as involving very important considerations, which required the most mature and deliberate discussion; and as it was impossible, from the advanced state of the session, that it should now experience such discussion, the former of these noblemen moved, that the consideration of it should be adjourned for three months. This motion gave rise to a debate, in which the Duke of Norfolk (who had abjured the errors of the Church of Rome) declared himself attached, from conviction, to the Church of England, as the best form of Christianity. The Catholic religion, he observed, had been overthrown in this country by the disgust occasioned by its practical corruptions, and by the abuses arising out of a tyrannical hierarchy.* But he accused the Church of England of harbouring a spirit of persecution. Lord Grenville rose to vindicate the Established Church, against this imputation, which he strongly and truly insisted, had not

* Woodfall's Reports, July 11, p. 558.

the slightest foundation in fact. — The very reverse of intolerance, his Lordship observed, had been the characteristic of the Protestant church, from the period of the reformation, to the present day. It was its liberality, its candour, its willingness to extend toleration, wherever it could be extended with safety to the constitution, that had formed its grand characteristic, and distinguished it from the bigotry, the intolerant and persecuting spirit of the church of Rome.*—Lord Kenyon's motion was carried, and the bill was consequently lost.

Before the session closed, Mr. Pitt applied to the House of Commons for a vote of credit, to the amount of half a million, to meet any unforeseen expences which might occur during the recess; and, at the same time, he mentioned the probable necessity of affording some relief to our faithful Ally, the Queen of Portugal. On the 20th of July, the King prorogued the Parliament.

* Idem, Ibid, p. 566.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

Views and resources of the French---Failure of their attempt to invade Ireland---Renewal of that project---They establish a correspondence with the Irish Rebels--- Means taken by the British Cabinet to counteract their designs--- Defeat of the Spanish Fleet, off Cape St. Vincent--- Signal bravery of Commodore Nelson---Remarkable omission in the official letter of Sir John Jervis to the Admiralty---Decisive victory over the Dutch Fleet, by Admiral Duncan---Campaign in Italy---Great superiority of the French Army---Infamous Proclamation of Buonaparte--- Gallant resistance of an Austrian detachment, at Belluna ---Passage of the Tagliamento by the French--- The Austrians retreat---Cowardly surrender of Gradiska---Operations in the Tyrol---French successful in every quarter--- Buonaparté proposes Peace to the Archduke---Motives of such proposal---Suspension of Arms---Divisions between the Directory, and the two Councils---Peace of Campo Formio ---Reflections on that Peace---Characters of the Directory ---Their conduct---Despised by the People---They court the Jacobins---Improved principles of the new Councils--- Their marked enmity to the Directory--- Plan of the Directory for their destruction---Many members of the Councils are seized by the troops, and transported by the Directory---Mr. Pitt resolves again to propose Peace to

the French---Negotiations at Lisle---Liberal propositions of the British Cabinet---Duplicity and equivocation of the French---Difficulties and delays promoted by the Directory---Their motives for such conduct---The Irish Rebels send Agents to Lisle---Inadmissible demands of the French Plenipotentiaries---Rupture of the Negotiation ---Meeting of Parliament---Debates on the Negotiation, at Lisle---Joint Address of the two Houses to the King---Opposed by Sir John Sinclair---Mr. Pitt's Speech---He paints the horrors of a French Invasion---Lord Temple and Doctor Lawrence express their joy at the failure of the Negotiation---The Address carried unanimously---Secession of Mr. Fox, and his associates, from Parliament ---Observations on the reasons assigned for their conduct ---A secession unjustifiable and unconstitutional---False notions of Mr. Sheridan on the subject---Matters of Finance---Tax upon Income---Mr. Fox, and his followers, attend the House, to oppose it---Their inflammatory Speeches---Inconsistency of Mr. Sheridan exposed---They refuse to grant any supplies until the Ministers shall be dismissed---Mr. Tierney declares, that, as an honest man, he will not vote a Shilling to the Ministers---Mr. Pitt's answer to Mr. Fox---Proves Mr. Fox's secession to be a violation of Duty---His probable motive to inflame the minds of the People---Bill passed for imposing the tax upon Income, by one hundred and ninety-six votes against seventy-one---Reflections on the Bill---Insufficiency of the criterion for ascertaining the amount of income---The Bill violently opposed by Lord Holland, in the House of Lords---Both Lord Holland and Mr. Fox, at a subsequent period, adopted the very principle, and supported the very measure, which they now condemned and reprobated---The Bill becomes a Law.

[1797-1798.] The French Directory, after their victories in Italy, in the campaign of 1796, entertained the most sanguine hopes of realizing their favourite plan of dictating peace to the Emperor at the gates of his capital; and, at the same time, of making such efforts on the ocean as would deprive England of her boasted superiority, on her favourite element. These hopes were not so visionary as most of the regicidal projects of the Republican rulers. Their ability to oppose England by sea was greatly increased by the complete power which they had acquired over the navies of Spain and Holland, which navies were, for all purposes of active hostility, identified with their own. It was, in consequence, intended to form a junction of the fleets of the three countries, which amounted to more than seventy sail of the line; to put a large military force on board; and to make a descent upon Ireland, or upon some part of the British coast. The French had, indeed, endeavoured to carry their plan, for the invasion of Ireland, into effect, at the close of 1796, when thirteen sail of the line had been sent for that purpose; but, being dispersed in a storm, the fleet suffered considerably, and was obliged to return to port, with the loss of one line of battle ship. It was now, however, intended to execute this favourite plan upon a

much larger scale; and, by the weight of numbers, to bear down the British fleet as they had done the Austrian armies.

They were the more confident of success, if they could effect a landing in Ireland, as they knew that country to be in a state of disaffection, and ripe for revolt; indeed, they maintained a regular correspondence with the leaders of the discontented party, who had authorized agents resident at Paris. The Directory, however, had not appreciated the difficulty of bringing the three fleets to act together; they had not calculated upon the activity of the English, stimulated as it was by every motive of self-preservation, in preventing the desired junction of this great maritime force, destined for their destruction. The British government, fully aware of the hostile designs of the enemy, had adopted every necessary precaution for rendering them abortive. While two competent fleets, in the Channel and in the Mediterranean, watched the different ports of France, Admiral Jervis was stationed, with fifteen sail of the line, off the coast of Spain; and Admiral Duncan, with ten sail of the line, cruized off the Texel, to watch the motions of the Dutch.

The first of these fleets that ventured to sea was the Spanish, which, to the number of

twenty-seven vessels of the line, was descried by the English in the night of the 13th of February, a few leagues from Cape St. Vincent. At half past eleven, in the following morning, the British Admiral was so fortunate as to come up with them, and, by able seamanship, to bring them to action, with great advantage. The Spanish ships were scattered, by which means the English were able to attack them before they could be collected, or formed, in a regular line; and, passing through their fleet, with great rapidity, they separated nine sail from the rest. The very scanty account* which appears, in the official letfer of Sir John Jervis to the Admiralty, leaves all the

* The whole account of the action itself is compressed in six lines, which I transcribe: "Passing through their fleet, in a line formed with the utmost celerity, tacked, and thereby separated one-third from the main body, after a partial cannonade, which prevented their re-junction till the evening; and by the very great exertions of the ships which had the good fortune to arrive up with the enemy, on the larboard tack, the ships, named in the margin, were captured, and the action ceased about five o'clock in the evening." Not a word is said of any particular ships, or of any particular officers, having distinguished themselves, though never was greater distinction gained in any action than by individuals in this; and the usual acknowledgement to officers and men, for their efforts, and services, on the occasion, were wholly omitted, although the omission stands without a parallel in the annals of the British navy.

particulars of this action to be collected from other, and less authentic, sources. It is known, however, that the British ships which were principally engaged, supported, in a distinguished manner, the national character for skill, conduct, and courage. Commodore Nelson, in the Captain, fought, for some time, three ships of superior force;—he boarded the San Nicholas, of eighty-four guns, a another first-rate ship yield to his spirit, and superior prowess. The act till five in the evening, when four s line, two of a hundred and twelve of eighty-four, and one of seventy- mained in the hands of the English; Spanish Admiral, with a force still having twenty-three sail of the line l now collected in close order, was glad t from the scene of his defeat. The loss English amounted, in killed and wound three hundred; two hundred and twent of which belonged to four ships, the Blen Captain Frederick; the Captain, Com Nelson, and Captain Miller; the Exce Captain Collingwood; and the Culloden, Captain Trowbridge. In the four Spanish ships that were taken, no less than six hundred and three men were killed and wounded. From the relative situations of the two fleets, and from

the manœuvres of the English, the action was necessarily partial on both sides; and several of the British ships took but a small part in it, and, of course, suffered but little. In the Admiral's ship, the Victory, there was but one man killed, and only five were wounded; and in the Diadem, there was not one killed. This specimen of the reception which they were destined to experience was sufficient to convince the enemy that their hopes, of ruining Great Britain, however well-founded in appearance, were not likely to be realized. If any doubts, however, on the subject, still remained on the minds of the Directory, another event occurred, some months after, which was, well-calculated to remove them.

The equinoctial gales having compelled Admiral Duncan to quit his station, and to return to Yarmouth to repair his ships, the Dutch commander, De Winter, embraced the opportunity to sail from the Texel, in order to join the Brest fleet. But the British Admiral, having received information of his motions by the cruizers which he had left off the Dutch coast, hastened in pursuit of him. His first object was to place his squadron between the Dutch fleet and the entrance of the Texel, so as to prevent the possibility of their returning, without being brought to action. On the

morning of the 11th of October, he chaced the Dutch fleet, and about noon came up with them about nine miles from the shore. The action commenced about forty minutes past twelve. Admiral Duncan, in the Venerable, broke through the enemy's line, and, with his division, brought their van to close action, which was maintained, with the greatest gallantry on both sides, for two hours and a half, when all the masts of the Dutch Admiral's ship went by the Board; still, however, the brave Dutchman continued to fight, in the most gallant style, till, overpowered by numbers, and having lost more than half his crew, he was compelled to strike, and his colours were carried on board the Venerable. About the same time, the Dutch Vice-Admiral, Bloys, surrendered to Vice-Admiral Onslow; and at four in the afternoon the action ceased, when ten sail of the line, and one frigate, had surrendered to the English. The remainder of the Dutch fleet, consisting of five sail of the line, and several frigates, escaped, by favour of the night.—This was one of the best-contested actions of the war. The loss of the English, in killed and wounded, was seven hundred and fifty-one; and that of the Dutch was much more considerable. This victory completely defeated the grand project of the French Directory, and

convinced them that it was much more easy to talk of wresting from the British the Sceptre of the Ocean, than to reduce their threats to practice.

By land, however, they were more successful; and victory still followed the banners of the Republic. As their grand effort was to be made in Italy, whence it was intended to penetrate into the hereditary states of Austria, their army, in that quarter, had been reinforced to 90,000 men; of whom Buonaparté had the command in chief, with Massena and Joubert under him. To oppose this force, the Archduke Charles, who was now placed at the head of the Austrians, had only the relics of the defeated troops of the preceding year, with a small body of new undisciplined troops; the whole composing an active force of not more than 38,000 men. Fresh levies, indeed, were raising in Croatia and Hungary; but it would be a considerable time before they could join the army. The utmost that the Archduke could expect to do, with a force so greatly inferior, was to defend the entrance into his brother's dominions, and to afford time, by judicious operations, for the destined reinforcements to join him. The Austrian troops occupied the duchy of Trent, the Tyrol, the country of Feltre, and the Trevisano; and the Arch-

duke's head-quarters were at Udina. The French line was at a short distance from the Austrian, and nearly in front of it.

On the 16th of March, Buonaparté put his army in motion, after he had addressed to them a proclamation, replete with the most infamous falsehoods respecting his exploits in the last campaign, with the most cowardly abuse of Austria and England, and threatening to produce a revolution in Hungary. The French pressed forward, and the Austrians retreated till the 13th of March, when General Lusignan, with only 2000 men, adopted the brave resolution to make a stand, behind the town of Belluna, against 10,000 French, under Massena, in order to gain time. For thirteen hours, did he brave the unequal contest; and maintained his post during the whole day. At last, however, being totally surrounded, the greater part of his gallant corps having been destroyed, and the whole of his ammunition expended, he made one desperate attempt to force his way with the bayonet, through the enemy's ranks, and, having failed in this, was compelled to surrender, with the small remnant of his troops.

Buonaparté now advanced his right wing, and passed the Tagliamento on the 16th, after a rigorous but ineffectual resistance on the part

of the Archduke, against a force so greatly superior to his own. This Prince contrived to fall back, gradually avoiding an engagement, which could not fail to be disastrous, and might be ruinous. By retreating, too, he augmented his own strength; while, by advancing, the enemy diminished his, from the necessity of leaving detachments in his rear, to secure his convoys, and open a communication with his magazines. He evacuated, on the eighteenth, the extensive fortress of Palma Nuova, which was in a bad state of defence, and the French took possession of it the same day. On the nineteenth, they moved forward to the Izonzo, and surrounded the town of Gradiska, which they made some vain attempts to carry by storm. Bernadotte summoned the Austrian commander to surrender, in the true style of French gasconade, and Republican brutality. He told him, that a longer resistance would be a crime, which he should principally revenge on his person, and, *to justify himself in the eyes of posterity*, he *must* summon him to surrender in ten minutes, and, in case of refusal, he should put the garrison to the sword. The Austrian officer did not wait for another attack, but, with more prudence than courage, surrendered his garrison prisoners of war. The French

then pushed on to the frontiers of Carinthia, and the Austrians fell back to Vippach.

At this time, Buonaparte put his left wing in motion, in order to dislodge the Austrians from the strong positions of the Tyrol.—Pressed by superior forces, the latter retired from post to post; they were attacked at Kerpen, on the twenty-fourth of March, and, after a most obstinate action, retreated, and took a position in the vicinity of Sterzingen, in the last, but strongest, part of the mountains of the Tyrol, on the side of Italy. In this last affair, Buonaparté assured the Directory, that General Dumas, *after having killed, with his own hands, several of the enemy's cavalry, like another Cocles, had alone stopped, for several minutes, upon a bridge, a squadron of cavalry, and had given time to his troops to come to his assistance.**

Being now in possession of three-fourths of the Tyrol, and having no fear of further resistance, Buonaparté hastened to the Izonzo, and made preparations for turning the right flank of the Austrian army. The Archduke, aware of his design, adopted the bold resolution of counteracting it, by a sudden and

* The History of the Campaign in Italy and Germany, p. 28.

vigorous attack upon the left wing of the French. He collected his troops for this purpose, and set off, on the twenty-first, for Tarvis, where he had ordered the different columns to meet, and where he expected to be joined by some troops from the Rhine. He had the mortification, however, to learn, on the road, that the defile of Pontaffal had been forced by the enemy, who had already reached the vicinity of Tarvis; and so gained the command of a road, by which two of the Austrian columns, with his artillery, and baggage, were to advance. In this critical situation the Archduke determined to attack the French at Tarvis, and to endeavour, by that means, to re-open this important communication. He, accordingly, sent orders to Generals Gontreuil and Bayalich, who commanded the two columns in question, to pass forward with all possible expedition. The first of these officers instantly obeyed the order, and drove the French from the village of Safnitz, and thus gave time for the artillery to arrive at Tarvis. On the twenty-third, Massena, who had marched to the assistance of his van-guard, attacked General Gontreuil with more than 10,000 men. Though the Austrian General had only 3,000 to oppose him, he resolved to defend a post of so much importance as that which he now occupied, to the

last extremity. The Archduke arrived during the action, and, mounting on a dragoon's horse, rushed into the thickest of the fight, and so animated his men by his example, that they fought with the utmost desperation, and resisted, for several hours, every attempt to dislodge them. The French, however, having received reinforcements in the afternoon, and the other column of the Austrians, under Bayalich, not being arrived, this gallant little corps was ultimately compelled to abandon the village of Safnitz, and to retire from the field of battle, in which they had so nobly distinguished themselves.

The greater part of Buonaparté's army was now stationed in Carniòla and Carynthia, and one division had taken possession of Clagenfurth. But he was aware that the further he advanced the greater would be his danger. He had found that his successes, far from striking the subjects of the Emperor with panic and dismay, had only served to rouse their courage, and to invigorate their efforts. The brave inhabitants of Austria, Hungary, and Bohemia, had rushed to arms; a large body of troops had been formed with great expedition; the spirit of the nation manifested itself in every quarter; and means of resistance were so provided, and multiplied, that the Corsican began to fear

that all the fruits of his past victories would be torn from him. Under these impressions, he sent a letter to the Archduke, on the last day of March, in which, after great professions of humanity, and many lamentations over the lives which had been sacrificed during the war, —professions and lamentations which, in the mouth of a man who had committed more wanton massacres, and more cold-blooded murders, than any tyrant who had ever desolated the face of the earth, could not fail to be duly appreciated,—he asked, if there were no prospect of putting an end to it. The Archduke, in his answer, told him, in substance, that it was his province to fight, and not to negotiate; but he immediately transmitted his letter to Vienna. In a few days, however, the Archduke received full power from the Emperor, to enter into a negotiation for peace with the French; and, on the seventh of April, a suspension of arms was agreed on, and signed.

During this time, the Austrian Generals, in the Tyrol, had been joined by a large body of the hardy inhabitants of that mountainous country, had attacked the French, and had nearly expelled them both from the German and the Italian Tyrol, when news of the suspension of arms put a stop to further hostilities. The negotiations were carried on with

so much rapidity, that the preliminary articles of peace were concluded at Leoben, on the eighteenth of April. But as the restitution of Mantua to the Emperor formed one of the articles, the Directory deemed them too favourable, and refused, for some time, to ratify them.

Before the news of the armistice had reached the armies on the Rhine, the campaign had opened in that quarter. The French there, as in Italy, were greatly superior in numbers to the Austrians; and Hoche, on the one hand, had passed the Rhine at Neuwied, and, in a few days, gained several advantages over General Werneck, who commanded the Austrians in that quarter, and advanced to the gates of Francfort.—On the other, Moreau had crossed the river a little below Strasburgh; had gained possession of the important fort of Kehl, which had lately cost the Austrians so many lives, without firing a shot; and had advanced to Ettenheim, and the neighbouring towns; when he received intelligence of the treaty of Leoben.

This treaty occasioned great divisions among the Directory, of which one of them, Carnot, has given a faithful account. He, and Le Tourneur, approved it, but the other three, whom he called the triumvirate, " were furious

at it; Reveillere," (the mild chief of the Theophilanthropists,) " was like a tiger, Rewbell sighed deeply. Barras disapproved the treaty, but said, ' that, nevertheless, it must be executed;' though, the very next day, unable to contain his rage, he rose hastily, and, addressing himself to me," says Carnot, " said, in a fury, ' Yet it is to you, that we are indebted for the infamous treaty of Leoben." Buonaparté, however, having approved the treaty, the Directory thought proper to ratify it; but, having so done, they refused to carry it into execution, and to restore Mantua to the Austrians.

By this perfidious conduct, on the part of the majority of the Directory, the Continent of Europe was kept in suspense for several months, while the most active preparations were making, on both sides, for the renewal of hostilities. Conferences were opened at Udina for the final arrangement of the definitive treaty; but the Directory obstinately refused to give up Mantua, and actually sent orders to renew the war, if the Emperor would not agree to surrender that important fortress to the new Cisalpine Republic.

During this interval of suspense, Buonaparté had been actively employed in completing the Revolution of Italy. To the new Cisalpine

and Cispadane Republics, was now added the Ligurian Republic, erected on the ruins of the Ancient Republic of Genoa; while the Little Republic of Lucca, not sufficiently republican for the modern reformers of Europe, was regenerated after the true French model. The Jacobin Generals on the Rhine, too, had not been less active; and, with the connivance and encouragement of the Directory, they established a Cis-Rhenane Republic in Germany. In Switzerland, too, Buonaparté having kindly undertaken to *mediate* between the Grisons and their subjects of the Valteline, graciously took the latter country under his immediate protection, by annexing it to the Cisalpine Republic.

While these military politicians were employed in giving to the crude offsprings of their savage minds "a local habitation and a name," while the sapient directors of the Great Nation were affording their sanction and encouragement to all their acts of violence and outrage, some few members of the legislative body had the sense to perceive, and the honesty to expose, the infamy of such proceedings.—Dumolard, who had derived some wisdom from the events of the revolution, openly condemned, in the Council of Five Hundred, the revolutions of Italy, and the attacks on the independence

of Venice and of Genoa; without provocation, and without authority from the legislative body. He compared them with the partition of Poland, and ascribed them to a vast system of destruction and *disorganization*, which he charged the Directory with pursuing.—"The first attempt," said he, "was on Venice; and finding that it did not incur your displeasure, a similar attempt, and equally successful, was made on Genoa.—A revolution had been there brought about by agents of the French government. Europe and posterity will reproach France for such a deviation from the principles which she herself asserted in her own behalf."

The Directory, however, pressed by a strong party at home, and fearful of losing their authority, had determined to employ force for the destruction of their enemies; and as it was necessary, for that purpose, to draw a considerable body of troops to Paris, they judged it expedient to conclude a peace with the Emperor. Accordingly, on the seventeenth of October, the peace of Campo Formio, (to which place the negotiations had been transferred from Udina,) was concluded, by which the Austrian Netherlands were ceded to the French Republic; which was also to retain possession of the islands in the Archipelago, of those in the Adriatic, which had been wrested from

the Venetians, and all the possessions of Venice in Albania. The Milanese and the Mantuan were ceded to the Cisalpine Republic.

On the other hand, the city of Venice, and all its territory, as far as the Adige, was secured to Austria, in absolute sovereignty.—An indemnity was to be granted to the Duke of Modena, whose dominions had been taken from him, in the Brisgaw.—And a congress was to meet at Rastadt, for settling a pacification between France and the German Empire.—Besides these known conditions, there were seventeen secret articles, which, at a subsequent period, were published by the Directory, and never formally disavowed by the House of Austria. By these articles, the Emperor engaged to employ his *good offices*, to procure, from the different states of the empire, their consent to the extension of the French frontier to the Rhine, including the bridge-head of Manheim, and the fortress of Mentz; to secure the free navigation of that river, and of the Meuse, to the French.—On the other hand, the Bishoprick of Saltzburg, and the river Inn, with a considerable portion of adjacent territory, was to be obtained for the Emperor; and the contracting parties entered into several *contingent* stipulations, dependent on the projected dismemberment of the German Empire, and

intended to prevent one of them from having a greater share of the spoil than the other.

By this peace, or rather by this precarious truce, the French government, independently of the vast acquisition of territory and power, which it secured to them, gained a great point, by extorting from the Emperor a sanction of all their revolutionary proceedings, and by making him a partner in their unprincipled projects for robbing neutral states of their independence, and transferring the people, like a herd of cattle, from one master to another. The Emperor, too, disgraced himself by an acquiescence in these plans, and especially by assisting in the dismemberment of that Empire, of which he was the lawful head, and which he was, consequently, bound to defend. It might, indeed, be urged, that the different Princes of the Empire had, first forsaken their chief, and, regardless of their duty, had violated those laws which they stood pledged to observe, and had afforded every possible assistance to the common enemy.—This, indeed, was but too true. Still their pusillanimous conduct, and their breach of faith, afforded the Emperor no legitimate justification for giving his support to the revolutionary system of France, by lending his aid to those plans of

disorganization, which constituted the most essential part of it.

It has been already observed, that the majority of the French Directory were adverse to the peace, and only consented to it because they were engaged in the execution of a plan, at home, which more materially affected themselves. The new government had become not merely unpopular, but even despicable in the eyes of the people; so much so, indeed, that the crafty Sieyes refused a seat in the Directory, who, according to Carnot's account, who was himself a director, had great difficulty even in procuring *servants*. Indeed, when it is considered of what materials the Directory was composed, the indignation or contempt in which it was universally holden, will not appear extraordinary. Every one of its members had been decided Jacobins, and had voted for the death of the King; and most of them had been active participators in all the crimes of Robespierre, during the prevalence of his system of terror. The Theophilanthropic, La Reveillere Lepaux, a man of obscure birth, of mean talents, and a weak mind, had left his botanical pursuits, in Anjou, to become a politician at Versailles. He was a member of the States-General, in 1789; and, though distinguished for his hatred of the aristocracy and

the clergy, he made a speech, in May, 1791, in which truth triumphed over prejudice; and the record of which exhibits as glaring an instance of inconsistency, in principle and conduct, as is to be found in the monstrous annals of the Revolution.—"In a country so extensive as France," said he, "the bonds of government ought to be drawn more closely together than in Glaris or Appenzel, or else she would be abandoned to the horrors of Anarchy, whence she would be extricated only to fall under the domination of a few intriguing spirits.—Therefore, I, who am not very partial to courts, do not hesitate to assert, that, *on that day on which France shall cease to have a King, she will lose her liberty and her repose, and be delivered up to the dreadful despotism of faction.*"* And yet this was the very man who combined to destroy the King of France, and who became a member of those very factions, whose desperate machinations overthrew the Throne and the Altar, fulfilling his prediction, by the annihilation of civil freedom, and domestic repose; and by establishing a system of despotism, the most odious and intolerable, to which any nation of the earth was ever known to submit. Carnot,

* See his Speech, of May the 18th, 1791, in the Moniteur of the following day.

his brother director, whom he deceived and outwitted, represents him, in his memoirs, as one of the most immoral and hypocritical of human beings; with falsehood on his tongue, and corruption in his heart. And he cites an instance of his barbarity truly atrocious.—— Doulcet's name being erased, by the Council of Five Hundred, from a list of proscription which the Directors had drawn up, La Reveillere was so enraged at the loss of his victim, that he seriously proposed to the other Directors to have him assassinated!

Soon after the appointment of the Directory, they coalesced, for a while, with the Terrorists, in order to crush their mutual enemies, the men of moderate principles; but the success of this plan was defeated by the still greater enmity which subsisted between those Terrorists who adhered to Robespierre to the last, and those who brought him to the scaffold. And, in the following Spring, of 1796, an event occurred which effected some change in the views and opinions of the Directory. In the month of May, that year, a conspiracy was discovered, the object of which was to murder the Directors, and all the members of the Administration, to overthrow the present system of government, and to restore the Constitution of 1793. This notable plan was

devised by a low fanatic, of the name of Baboeuf, who had assumed the Roman appellation of *Gracchus;* and who was assisted by the noted Drouet, the postilion, who stopped the King at Varennes. Both these men were apprehended; Baboeuf having, on his trial, boldly avowed his crime, in which he gloried, suffered death; but the Jacobins contrived to effect the escape of Drouet from prison; and this wretch, who had the mind and manners of a post-boy, was afterwards employed by the Directory. After this discovery, the Directors adopted greater circumspection in their conduct, and moderation in their language; and no difference occurred between them and the Councils, till the new election, which took place in the Spring of 1797; when, notwithstanding all the arts of intrigue which were exerted by the Directory, and all the manœuvres of the Jacobins, nearly the whole of the new deputies, were adverse to the present system,— most of them were men of anti-revolutionary principles, and among them were some royalists, and even more than one emigrant.

It was now the time for one of the Directors, too, to go out, by lot; but Letourneur, being one of the least decided characters among them, and supposed to be weaker than his

associates, (though he had voted for the death of the King, pronounced a public on eulogy *Marat*, at the Jacobin Club, and had even undertaken the defence of *Carrier*, in the Convention;) it was resolved to bribe him, by a large sum of money, and the post of Ambassador, to let the lot fall upon him. He accordingly resigned the Directorial Office, and Barthelemi was chosen to succeed him.

From this time, there was a majority of the two Councils opposed to the Directory, and, during the Summer of 1797, a regular warfare was carried on between them, in messages and in speeches. The majority of the nation sided with the Councils, and, if their energy had been equal to the goodness of their cause, there could have been little doubt that they would succeed in their efforts, to give a better Constitution to France, and peace to Europe. Their opponents, however, were better versed in the revolutionary tactics, more conversant with the maxims of the Robespierrian school, and less scrupulous about the means of accomplishing their end. The Directory, too, were masters of the army, and of the whole executive power of the state.

The enemies of the Directory, conscious of their majority, made no secret of their designs; but, with a degree of weakness not

easily to be accounted for, considering that they must have had a perfect knowledge of the characters and dispositions of the men who were opposed to them, they lost their time in petty disputes, and in subjecting the Directory to trifling mortifications; whereas, if they had either waited quietly till the period of another election, when they might, without difficulty, have secured a majority in the Directory, or had struck some decisive blow before the Directors were thoroughly prepared for resistance, their triumph had been certain and complete.

Although the Directory had solemnly declared, that they could not, on any consideration, violate any one article of the Constitutional code, when called upon to give up a portion of the conquests which they had made, in order to restore peace to Europe; yet, when their object was to crush their personal enemies, they did not scruple to violate two very essential articles of the same code. By one article, the army were expressly prohibited from *deliberating* on any subject whatever.—Yet, on the present occasion, in consequence of applications from the Directory, who had connived at all their plunder and extortion, they loudly declared themselves in their favour. Buonaparté made all the divisions of the army of Italy

present petitions, of a threatening nature, against the Councils. Moreau and Hoche did the same with their armies on the Rhine.—And the latter, who, from a stable boy, had become a General, as being a furious jacobin, was pitched upon by the Directory, to command a body of troops, which they had ordered to Paris to destroy their enemies in the councils. By another article of the Constitution, the approach of troops to within a certain distance from the place at which the Legislative Body held its sittings, was expressly forbidden.—But this, and every other article, were disregarded by the Directory, when they had any favourite object to accomplish. Hoche, however, alarmed at the state in which he found the public mind, on his approach to the Capital, was induced to decline the commission;* and Augereau, who was originally a private soldier in the Neapolitan army, but now a favourite General with Buonaparté, was employed in his

* In some accounts it is stated, that Hoche committed certain acts of imprudence, (which, from the violence and brutality of his disposition, is not at all improbable,) which rendered it necessary for the Directory to disavow him. He died soon after his return to Germany; and the accounts differ as to the mode of his death, some imputing it to poison administered by order of the Directory, (See History of the Campaign of 1797. Vol. II. p. 213. *Note.*) and others to debauchery. (See Dictionnaire Biographique, Tome III. p. 198.)

stead. Augereau had no sooner taken the command of the troops, than he moved forward, and passed the limit prescribed by the Constitution. The impetuosity of this man had outstripped the wishes of the Directory, who were not yet prepared to inflict the meditated blow; and, had the Councils acted with firmness and decision, and passed a decree of accusation against the triumvirate, they might still have succeeded. But they wasted that time, which should have been employed in action, in frivolous debates, and fruitless discussions; and, while they were engaged in the silly expedient of ascertaining, with precision, whether the troops had really passed the Constitutional limit, the hall in which they sate was suddenly surrounded, and most of the chiefs of the party, in opposition to the Directory, together with the new director, Barthelemi, were arrested without the smallest resistance or difficulty; and, being placed in carriages, resembling iron cages, previously prepared for the purpose, were sent to Rochefort, where a frigate waited to transport them to the pestilential deserts of Guiana. The remains of the two councils, who no longer constituted a legitimate body of representatives, and who were not competent to perform any one act of legislation, now assembled at the *Odeon*, and conferred on

the Directory, by a formal decision, that absolute power which they had usurped, in breach of the constitution, which was specially trusted, by its concluding provision, to the safeguard of the Directory and the Legislative Councils. The immediate consequence of this event was, the triumph of jacobinism, and the re-establishment of a revolutionary government.

During these transactions in the interior of France, Mr. Pitt, and the British Cabinet, resolved to make one other effort to induce the French Government to open a negotiation with a real view to the conclusion of a peace. The only possible reason which could induce the Ministers to think that there existed, at this time, a greater probability of finding in the Directory a better disposition to conclude a fair and reasonable peace, than at the period when they made their last attempt, was the spirit which the majority of the two Councils had lately displayed. The preliminaries of peace, indeed, between the Emperor and the French, recently signed at Leoben, rendered it politic to become a party in the pending negotiations for a definitive treaty, as the allied powers could treat with more advantage jointly than separately. But it was very well known that the Directory would never depart from their settled system of concluding

distinct and separate treaties. The preliminaries of Leoben, however, smoothed the way to a successful negotiation between England and France, as the Emperor had himself surrendered the Austrian Netherlands, which appeared to constitute the principal obstacle in the last negotiations; although it did not necessarily follow that England should acquiesce in the possession of a country by France, which would increase not only her general power, but her particular means of annoyance, as applicable to Great Britain, because the lawful possessor of that country had been compelled, by the force of arms, to surrender it.

Thus stimulated, and always most anxious for peace,* the British Ministers resolved to apply to the French Government on the subject. Accordingly, on the first of June, Lord Grenville wrote to M. Delacroix, proposing to enter, without delay, upon the discussion of the views and pretensions of Great Britain and France, for the purpose of signing prelimina-

* A writer, in the Annual Register for 1798, with very little regard to truth, asserts, that the British Ministry "*assumed only an appearance* of being desirous to put an end to the war, to which the public had long testified an aversion." This evident desire was not a mere appearance, but an absolute reality; for never was man more sincerely desirous to attain any object than Mr. Pitt was to put an end to the war.

ries of peace, which might be definitively arranged at a future congress. This letter was immediately answered by the French Minister, who expressed the eagerness of the Executive Directory (an eagerness which they certainly never felt) to receive the pacific overtures of the British Court, and their desire that the negotiations for a definitive treaty should be entered upon at once. On the 11th of June, passports were forwarded for the British Plenipotentiary, but drawn up in a very unusual manner, declaring them to be passports for a person "*furnished with the full powers of his Britannic Majesty, for the purpose of negotiating, concluding, and signing a definitive and separate treaty of peace with the French Republic.*" This paltry artifice did not escape Lord Grenville, who, in his reply, objected to that part of the passports, as not answering exactly to the powers and mission of the King's Plenipotentiary, whose full powers would include every case, and, without prescribing to him any particular mode of negotiation, would give him the most unlimited authority to conclude any articles, or treaties, whether preliminary or definitive, which might best conduce to the speedy re-establishment of peace, the Minister being equally ready and authorized to begin the negotiation upon either footing. As to the question

of a separate treaty, it was his Majesty's determination to provide for what was due to the Queen of Portugal, being willing, at the same time, to enter into the necessary explanations with respect to the interests of Spain and Holland. The Executive Directory expressed their perfect coincidence with the sentiments of the British Monarch, and consented to send new passports, although they declared that another person would have been more likely to conclude a peace than Lord Malmesbury. After an interchange of two or three preliminary notes, Lord Malmesbury repaired to Lisle, and, on the 6th of July, had his first conference with the French Plenipotentiaries, Letourneur, (lately one of the Directory) Preville le Pelley, and Maret, whose secretary was General Colchen.

In order to obviate every difficulty, to avoid every unnecessary delay, and to prevent those imputations of insincerity, which enmity on the one hand, and faction on the other, had so lavishly, and so unjustly, cast upon the Ministers, after their former vain attempt to put an end to the war, Lord Malmesbury, the very day after the exchange of full powers with the French Plenipotentiaries, delivered in a project, containing the specific terms on which England was willing to make

peace with France; and never, surely, at the outset of a negotiation, were terms so reasonable, so equitable, and so favourable, proposed by one contracting party to another, whose relative situation was similar to that of the present belligerent powers. In fact, the language held was, substantially, this — *Great Britain will restore all her conquests, without exception, which have been made from France; and of the conquests which France has made, Great Britain requires the restitution of none!* The British Cabinet offered, at the same time, to make peace with Spain and Holland, (the allies of France) on condition of retaining the Island of Trinidad, the Cape of Good Hope, Trincomalè, in the Island of Ceylon, and of receiving the town and fort of Cochin in exchange for Negapatnam. In respect of France herself, there was nothing to which it was possible for the Directory, had they been really desirous of peace, to object in these conditions, which left them in possession of their favourite boundaries, and, indeed, the absolute masters of the European Continent from the Gulph of Naples to the Texel. And the terms proposed to their allies were as reasonable as, in the relative circumstances of the respective powers, could possibly be expected.

Eight days elapsed before any answer was

given to these proposals; and then the Directory insisted, as *an indispensable preliminary*, that Great Britain should restore every conquest which she had made on France *and* on her allies. On this insolent, and unwarrantable proposal, which proved that the Directory never meant to conclude a peace, Lord Malmesbury truly remarked,* that it would not only most certainly prevent the treaty from beginning, but would leave no room for treating at all, since it deprived the King of Great Britain of every means of negotiation;—it went, indeed, to establish a principle of all cession and no compensation. The observations which his Lordship made on the subject were such as could not be answered; and, therefore, the French Ministers exerted their ingenuity to convince Lord Malmesbury, that it was not intended to prevent negotiation, and that the obvious meaning of the proposal was not that which he ought to put upon it. The Directory themselves, indeed, appeared to coincide with their plenipotentiaries in this explanation, and to admit the reasonableness of the objection started by the British Plenipotentiary, as they remained for a considerable time unresolved, and affected to consult with the governments of Spain and Holland, with a view to obtain their consent to some relaxation of the conditions proposed.

* See State Papers relating to this negotiation, No. 20.

Indeed, the observations of the British Cabinet, on this strange proposal, conveyed by Lord Grenville to Lord Malmesbury, and, by the latter, repeated to the French Plenipotentiaries, were unanswerable. It was remarked, that France, treating in conjunction with her allies, and in their name, could not, with any pretence of justice and fairness, oppose her treaties with them as an obstacle in the way of any reasonable proposal of peace in which they were to be included. In a separate negotiation, to which they were not parties, such a plea might, perhaps, have been urged; but, in that case, France would have been bound to offer, from her own means, that compensation which she did not think herself at liberty to engage to obtain from her allies.—And these reasons were urged with a better grace by the British Cabinet, as they were precisely the same which had influenced their own conduct in the last negotiations, when Great Britain was bound by engagements to Austria similar to those by which France now pretended to be bound to her allies. But it never could be allowed, that France, Spain, and Holland, negotiating jointly for a peace with Great Britain, could set up, as a bar to the just demands of the latter, the treaties between themselves, from which they

were, at once, able to release each other whenever they should think fit.

Some objections, of a trifling nature, were made, by the French Plenipotentiaries, to two or three of the articles in Lord Malmesbury's project. The first to which they objected was, the title of King of France, used by the King of England, which was no longer admissible, according to them, after Monarchy was destroyed in that country, although it was well known, that it was a mere title of honour, unconnected with pretensions of any kind; and was certainly less galling to French Republicans than it could have been to a French Monarch. They next objected to a renewal of all former treaties, although it was an article usually inserted in all treaties, and was peculiarly well calculated to obviate misapprehensions, and to prevent future disputes; and although, by the insertion of it in the present project, the French Government was placed, by Great Britain, in precisely the same situation in which the French Monarchy had always stood, which amounted to the fullest acknowledgment of their sovereignty, and the completest recognition of the Republic, that could be desired on the one hand, or given on the other. But these were subordinate points, on

which the success of the negotiation did not at all depend. In the beginning of the correspondence between the respective plenipotentiaries, Lord Malmesbury had been assured that, if the Directory should reject the terms which he might propose, they would, themselves, present a counter-project, containing their own conditions; and this promise they were now called upon to fulfil.

The French plenipotentiaries admitted the justice of the demand, and declared that they would immediately apply to the Directory for that purpose. But, though this communication took place on the 25th of July, the remainder of that, and the whole of the following, month, were suffered to pass away, without presenting this counter-project, without any modification of the late demand of the Directory, and without advancing a single step in the negotiation. And, although Lord Malmesbury frequently remonstrated against this dilatory conduct, so strongly indicative of a determination to conclude no treaty, the Directory had the profligate assurance, in a message to the Council of Five Hundred, to impute the delay to the British Cabinet. Lord Malmesbury, however, extorted from their Minister an avowal of the injustice of the charge, and from the

Directory themselves a declaration, as false as the imputation itself, that they meant no reflection on the English government.

But there was an efficient cause for all this shuffling and equivocation, on the part of the Directory, which was obvious to every one who attended to the passing events at Paris.—The majority of the Directory, and the Jacobin party, in the two councils, were decidedly adverse to peace, and intent on producing the destruction of England, by revolutionary means; *Delenda est Carthago*, was their favourite maxim,* which Brissot had first applied to this country; and which every successive leader had adopted. On the other hand, the majority of the Commons, and two of the Directors, Carnot and Barthelemi, were really desirous of peace. This had been the subject of frequent disputes between the rival parties; and so long as the majority in the Councils were adverse to the majority in the Directory, the latter were afraid of declaring their sentiments openly, and of bringing the negotiations at Lisle to an abrupt termination. Resolved, however, on the final accomplishment of their purpose, they contrived to prolong the conferences till they had succeeded in their meditated destruc-

* See Camille Jourdan's address to his constituents.

tion of their political enemies. But no sooner was the revolution of the fourth of September achieved, than they threw off the mask, and assumed a different tone, and observed a different conduct. They recalled their plenipotentiaries from Lisle, and sent two others in their stead, Treilhard and Bonnier, whose principles were more in unison with their own, and who were secretly instructed to break off the negotiation as soon as possible. At the first interview which these men had with Lord Malmesbury, they repeated, in peremptory terms, the very same demand, which had been positively rejected two months before;—that Great Britain should restore all the possessions which she had taken from France and her allies; on the old principle, that the Directory could not agree to any terms that were inconsistent with the laws of the Republic, or incompatible with her treaties;—and this was again required as an indispensable preliminary to negotiation.—The Directory could not possibly have taken a more efficient means for breaking off the negotiation; nor could they have had recourse to this for any other purpose, or with any other view. They knew that it had been positively rejected before; and that the British Cabinet had expressed their firm determination never to degrade their country by acceding to a proposal so arrogant, un-

reasonable, and unjust; and therefore they must have been certain that it would produce an immediate rupture of the negotiation.

Treilhard, indeed, who had been bred a lawyer, when Lord Malmesbury stated these circumstances to him, endeavoured, with great ingenuity, to prove, that this very proposal only manifested the earnest desire of the Directory to remove every obstacle to the conclusion of a peace. In other words, that the Directory were anxious to make peace, if allowed to dictate their own terms, and to disgrace their enemy in the eyes of Europe, by extorting his consent to conditions to which he had before declared he never would accede. In answer to the remark of the British plenipotentiary, that, by the adoption of this proposal, no subject for negotiation would be left, he maintained, that this would not be the case, that many articles would still remain to be proposed, and many points for important discussion.—As, however, he declared that the orders of the Directory were peremptory and precise, and that they would never depart from this demand, Lord Malmesbury formally renewed his refusal to comply with it;—and that very day he received an order to leave Lisle in four and twenty hours.*

* The just observations, which my deceased friend, Mallet du Pan, the most acute and intelligent political writer

The further subjects of discussion mentioned by Treilhard, prepared Great Britain for demands still more humiliating, had she been weak and base enough to comply with the first,

of the age in which he lived, applied to the abrupt dismission of Lord Malmesbury from Paris, will equally apply to his *as* abrupt dismission from Lisle.

" Whatever were the views of the British government, the Directory did not take the trouble of throwing the blame upon them; they took upon themselves the responsibility attached to the rupture, with their usual arrogance and audacity. Since public negotiations, regular forms, and the obligation of mutual respect, had been established in Europe, there had never before been an instance of the Ambassador of a great power, equally entitled to attention by his personal qualities, and his public character; and coming to propose peace from a nation which had not lost a single inch of territory, being treated with such brutal insolence; and, after having experienced every kind of affront, being driven away, like a spy, at twenty-four hours notice.

" This is incontestibly a new right of nations! The courtier, who is most partial to the French revolution, cannot deny, that there now exists a power, which, in its negotiations, has introduced the mode which the Senate of Rome pursued with the little Kings of Asia, and which the Eastern Monarchs still observe with their tributary states. It is not England alone that sustains this affront, it is all Europe; it is an insult levelled at all crowned heads, and at all the conventions of custom and decorum, which have been eternally respected. The state which violates these with outrage, declares itself the sole arbiter of the respect and attention which are due to the sovereignty of other powers, and proclaims its disavowal of their titles and their rights; it avers, that all the proceedings hitherto

which the insolence and presumption of the Regicidal Directory had led them to propose. The restitution of fourteen ships of the line, and twenty-four frigates, being the number which had been taken or destroyed, at the evacuation of Toulon, had been urged in an early part of the negotiation.—But there was reason to believe, that one of the points, reserved for further discussion, was of much greater importance, and related to nothing less than the separation of Ireland from Great Britain, and its erection into an independent republic, under the special protection of France. It is known, that a regular correspondence had been long maintained between the members of the Irish Union and the French government; that the former had sent Mac Nevin to Paris, as their regular Ambassador, to claim their assistance, and to settle with them the plan of that invasion, which was afterwards unsuccess-

observed must fall before its own supremacy; and that, henceforth, it will regulate its negotiations by the caprice of its directors, and by the rule generally observed by a sovereign in a compromise with rebels.

Letter to a Minister of State, on the connection between the political system of the French Republic, and the system of its Revolution.—Translated from the French of Mallet du Pan. P. 9, 10.

fully attempted by Hoche; and that he had frequent conferences with the Directory, during the whole time of Lord Malmesbury's first embassy. At *Lisle*, also, agents from the disaffected in Ireland had interviews with the French plenipotentiaries.* And there is not a doubt of the existence of a regular treaty between the Directory and the Irish Rebels, by which the former undertook to supply the latter with the necessary succours for enabling them to resist the lawful government of the country, and to establish them as a separate

* In a paper published in Ireland, and notoriously supported by, and speaking the sentiments of, the United Irishmen, *The Union Star, No.* 8, appeared the following address, to the people of Ireland.

"Irishmen!—Your country is *represented* by brethren of ability and virtue.---*They plead your cause at Lisle, they negotiate for an independent Irish republic,* in the teeth of that diplomatic spy--- Malmesbury. *They are countenanced and encouraged by the French commissioners;* and we have some hopes, that Ireland will be seen in the political map of Europe, when her cruel step-sister is consigned to the insignificance her crimes justly merit. Should some unfortunate event put off your delivery, by England purchasing an immediate peace, you should not despond.---*Peace will be only temporary!*--- it may be productive of some political comforts, as we may then openly praise and study the glorious truths France is capable of producing. Communication with that country will be renewed, and liberty will gain new strength, and knowledge be more universal; consequently despotism must die; and Irishmen will go to the funeral!"

and independent state. If, therefore, the British Cabinet had once admitted the principle, that the treaties which France had concluded should govern the terms of peace between her and Great Britain, it is evident, the French government would have brought forward their treaty with the Irish, as one on which they were bound to insist, and to which, after her first admission, it would have been contended, Great Britain could not, consistently, refuse her assent.

The papers, relating to this negotiation, were laid before Parliament, which met early in November; were taken into consideration by the House of Lords on the seventh, and by the House of Commons on the tenth, of that month. In the Upper House, the address moved by Lord Grenville, passed without a dissentient voice; and, in order to give it greater weight and effect, it was proposed to render it the joint address of both Houses. Sir John Sinclair moved an amendment to it, in the Commons, which was strongly resisted by Mr. Pitt, and met, indeed, so little encouragement, that he was induced to withdraw it, and the address passed unanimously. Mr. Pitt entered into a clear investigation of the conduct of the French, during the negotiation,

and contrasted it with that of the English. On one side, all had been candour, liberality, and openness;—on the other, all fraud, duplicity, and injustice.— And, adverting to the preliminary condition prescribed by the Directory, he asked, whether he need argue the inadmissibility of such a demand?—Need he address himself to any set of men to prove its disgraceful nature, its arrogant pretension, or the infamy of acceding to it?—Could there be any man in this country to whom the argument would be necessary? Such a preliminary could not be admitted by any one who was not prepared to adore, in prostrate baseness, the idol of French power, who was not ready to prostitute the dignity, and the honour, of his country at the feet of France, to submit to the burden of accumulating infamy, and of still more degrading homage, of demands still more ignominious, to cancel at once all the honours of the British name, and to overthrow the foundations of British greatness.*

He marked the object and designs of the enemy, in a strain of animated eloquence, which rivetted the attention of the House, and truly observed, that it was not our com-

* Woodfall's Reports, Nov. 10, 1797, p. 118.

merce, nor yet our territories, which would satisfy the implacable vengeance of the French government. No! it was their object to destroy the essence of our liberty, the foundation of our independence, the citadel of our happiness,—our constitution! That was the avowed object of their hostility. They had recently declared, that the French and English Government could not subsist together; that one of them must be destroyed. Should they come amongst us, they would bring with them their invading army, the great pestilence to man, the genius of French liberty, which contained in itself every curse to society, and would produce the total subversion of our constitution, with which it formed a fatal and malignant contrast. In the place of that beautiful fabric would be a hideous monster, that nothing could satisfy but the annihilation of British freedom, and of those glorious principles which had rendered us the most conspicuous, and the most happy, people in Europe. If, therefore, we valued property,—if we valued liberty,—if we valued law,—if we valued national power,—if we valued any thing that either had contributed, or could contribute, to our happiness, or even to our safety,—we should resist, with indignation, the demands of our enemy. It affected us all from the highest to the lowest.

There was not one man, let his enjoyments be ever so great, or his property ever so considerable, who should not sacrifice any portion of it to oppose the violence of the enemy, nor one whose stock was so small, that he should not be ready to sacrifice his life in the same cause. We owed it as a debt to posterity, as well as to ourselves, to preserve our character in the page of history. We owed it as a gratitude to Providence, whose goodness had placed us so high in the scale of nations, and had caused us to be the admiration of Europe, with most of th governments of which our own formed a happ contrast.

In the course of the debate, Lord Temp expressed his concern that the negotiation h been begun, and his joy at its abrupt termin tion; in which sentiments Doctor Lawrenc declared his perfect coincidence. Hence appeared that Lord Fitzwilliam was not singu lar in his opinions, on the inexpediency an danger of negotiating with the present gover ment of France, so long as they continued act on the principles of the original regicid indeed, those opinions were entertained b many of the personal friends, and admirers, o Mr. Burke.

In their joint address, the two Houses Parliament declared, that, after taking in

their most serious consideration the papers laid before them, they had recognized, in every stage of the negotiation, his Majesty's invariable and unremitted solicitude for their prosperity and welfare; while, on the other hand, they had seen the most abundant proofs of the continuance of that spirit of inveterate animosity, and desperate ambition, on the part of the enemy, in which the present contest first originated. His Majesty's conduct, characterized by an unexampled moderation, openness, and consistency, had left to the enemy no means of evasion, no subterfuge of disguise or artifice. It could no longer be doubted that their conduct was actuated by a fixed determination of excluding all means of peace, and of pursuing, at all hazards, their hostile designs against the happiness, and safety, of these kingdoms. Even the vain pretence of pacific dispositions was now abandoned, and the real purpose of all their councils, and all their measures, was, at length, openly and publicly avowed. It was to our laws, and government, that they had declared their irreconcileable hatred. No sacrifice would content them but that of our liberty; no concession but that of our envied and happy constitution.

Under such circumstances, the Lords and Commons felt the duty which they owed to

God and to their country. Animated by the same sentiments which his Majesty had been pleased to declare to his people and to the world; attached to his Majesty by principle, duty, and gratitude, and sensible that it was only from firmness, and courage, that they could look either for present safety or for permanent peace, they were determined to defend, with unshaken resolution, his Majesty's Throne, the lives and properties of their fellow-subjects, the government and constitution of their country, and the honour and independence of the British empire. They knew that great exertions were necessary; they were prepared to make them; and, placing their firm reliance on that Divine protection which had always, hitherto, been extended to them, they would support his Majesty to the utmost, and stand or fall with our religion, laws, and liberties.

These were patriotic sentiments; such as it became the representatives of a free and powerful nation to carry to the Throne of a Sovereign, who had no interest separate from that of his people; and whose first care, and greatest anxiety, were to promote their interests, to secure their happiness, and to guard their independence.

The cause of the unanimity which prevailed on this subject, in Parliament, was not

the redemption of that pledge which the leaders of the Opposition had solemnly given to support the war, if equitable terms of peace could not be obtained from the enemy; but their absence from Parliament, and the spontaneous neglect of the duties of a representative. After the rejection of Mr. Grey's plan of Parliamentary Reform, Mr. Fox, and his followers, in both Houses, indignant at the inattention shewn to all their arguments, at the neglect displayed of all their admonitions, and at the refusal of Parliament and the public, to adopt their principles and opinions, by the sacrifice of their own, determined to show their resentment, by deserting their posts, absenting themselves from Parliament, and leaving the majority to their fate. They seem to have entertained the strange notion, that they were sent to Parliament for their own gratification, or advancement; to oppose government, on all occasions, and to endeavour, by every means, to dispossess the Ministers of their situations, with a view to fill them themselves; and that, if they failed in all, or in any, of these objects, their vocation was at an end, and their labours might cease. If they had taken a just view of their situation, they would have perceived that their conduct was not to be justified upon the grounds which they alledged in its

defence; or, indeed, on any grounds at all. The systematic absence of a member has been truly considered as an unjustifiable abandonment of a trust reposed in him by his constituents, and as a base desertion of the duty which he owed to the public. But there is a still stronger ground of condemnation, since, by such desertion, members render the national representation incomplete. Had the Opposition acted with consistency, on this occasion, they would have accepted the Chiltern Hundreds, have vacated their seats, and have afforded their constituents an opportunity for returning other representatives, with less ambition, and greater perseverance. Mr. Sheridan, indeed, contended, that his absence from Parliament was a matter with which neither the nation nor the House had any concern, a question to be settled between him and his conscience. This doctrine was alike false and unconstitutional; every representative being amenable, not indeed to the persons by whom he is elected, but to the nation at large, whom he represents, for his political conduct; and more especially for refusing to perform those duties which attach to his public station, and the due discharge of which is the implied condition of his election.

But, although neither the critical state of the country, during the existence of the mutiny,

nor yet the increased danger with which it was threatened, by an enemy bent on its destruction, was sufficient to rouse the dormant patriotism of Mr. Fox; yet, no sooner was the Minister engaged in the most arduous and irksome of all his duties, in devising means for raising pecuniary supplies adequate to the exigencies of the times, than he summoned his little band of faithful followers, and, yielding to envy what he denied to principle, again entered the field of debate.

On the 24th of November, Mr. Pitt opened his scheme of finance for furnishing the supplies of the ensuing year, which, notwithstanding a reduction of expence, to no less an extent than £6,700,000, in the military and naval departments, amounted to twenty-five millions and a half. The great depression in the funds, at this period, suggested to the Minister the necessity of exercising great forbearance in having recourse to the funded system, which, though adopted as the most conducive to public good, on general principles, yet might be carried to an excess highly ruinous to public credit. To avert this evil, Mr. Pitt now proposed to raise seven millions of the supplies within the year, by a proportionate increase of the assessed taxes, so as not to exceed, in any instance, a tenth part of the income of the

contributor, of the amount of which they were supposed to constitute a fair criterion. Of the twenty-five millions to be raised, the growing produce of the consolidated fund, and the lottery, were estimated to supply £750,000; and the land and malt tax £2,800,000; making together three millions and a half. The Bank had agreed to advance three millions on Exchequer bills to be repaid, at short periods;—seven millions would be produced by the proposed augmentation of the assessed taxes;—and twelve millions would remain to be raised by the customary mode of a loan.

Upon the scale proposed for increasing the assessed taxes, if the duty amounted to more than one-tenth part of the annual income, the party was to be relieved by making oath of the fact. Two hundred a year was the lowest income, from which ten per cent. was to be taken; and the contribution descended, in a regular scale of abatement, to an income of sixty pounds, from which one hundred and twentieth part, or ten shillings only, was to be deducted.

This plan excited great opposition, and no little discussion, both in Parliament and out of it. Mr. Tierney, who seemed anxious to supply the place of Mr. Fox, was, at first, its chief opponent; but, at length, on the 14th

of December, when the report was brought up, Mr. Fox, with Mr. Sheridan, and the rest of his followers, attended the House. On that occasion they exerted themselves, to the utmost, to persuade the House to adopt those sentiments, and that line of conduct, which it had so constantly rejected, and its rejection of which was the avowed cause of their secession. But Mr. Fox and Mr. Sheridan refused to vote one shilling to the present Ministers, whose dismission they represented as necessary for the attainment of peace.* They

* In the debate of Nov. 24, Mr. Tierney had alledged, as a valid reason for the dismission of Ministers, that they had not the confidence of the enemy, who would not, therefore, make peace with them; upon which Mr. Pitt observed,—"Sir, we cannot have the confidence of the enemy. The confidence of the enemy! No, Sir, that is impossible! We are not entering into the spirit of their rules; we are not disposed to promote their principles; we do not wish to imitate their system; we do not think it practical in England, however it may be made the subject of applause *by those who favour it in their hearts*, and, for the purpose of opposing England's true interest, the occasional theme of vindictive declamation, while it is wished that their principles should be adopted; which principles have been admired, and occasionally extolled, since the commencement of the revolution, by those who have opposed us. If the only claim to the support of the honourable gentleman in the prosecution of the war is, to deserve the confidence of the enemy; if it is necessary to admire the French Revolution, which has been the root of all the evils of the present contest; if it is necessary to have asserted the justice of the

admitted, indeed, that they had once given a pledge to support the government, in case the French should refuse to accede to fair and honourable terms of peace; but that the pledge had been given when this country had great and powerful allies, and had been recalled, when Alderman Combe had moved for the dismission of Ministers. This pitiful and dishonest subterfuge was marked by as much duplicity as distinguished the conduct of the French Directory, whose cause they again pleaded with equal talent and energy. At the commencement of the war, in 1793, Mr. Sheridan avowed it to be his wish for this country to carry on the war alone, and to reject all alliances with the despots of Austria and Prussia; and yet, in 1797, he assigned the loss of these alliances as the motive of his refusal to support the war!

enemy's cause; if the exertions of the war are to be entrusted to those who have, from its commencement, thwarted its prosecution, then, indeed, I am glad that we have not the vote of the honourable gentleman in our favour." *Woodfall's Reports, Nov.* 24, 1797, *p.* 228. Mr. Tierney's notions of the qualifications of a British Minister, appear to have been equally correct with his ideas of the duty of a British Representative. Two days before this debate, on Nov. 22, at the close of his speech, on the subject of the restrictions on the Bank, he said, "For my part, I can put my hand on my heart, and declare that, *as an honest man*, I never will vote a shilling to his Majesty's present Ministers.

On the third reading of the bill, on the fourth of January, the Opposition again honoured the House with their attendance; and Mr. Fox again exerted his utmost powers to influence the minds of the people, by as violent a speech as ever was delivered within the walls of St. Stephen's Chapel. He maintained, that the constitution existed only in form and not in substance; that we had then, indeed, a form of Government, consisting of King, Lords, and a Commons' House of Parliament; but not a Government consisting of the King, Lords, and the Commons, representatives of the people of Great Britain; it was a Government in which the power of the people was nothing.* By the theory of the constitution the House was free; but by its practice the members had no freedom to oppose the Crown in any thing of that nature; and the constitution was then shaken to its very foundation.† He made a most impotent attempt to defend his conduct in neglecting to discharge his duty in Parliament while he retained his seat.—He justified such an unconstitutional proceeding by the weak assertion, that although he could not be useful to the country at that time, he might at some other.‡

* Woodfall's Reports, Jan. 14, 1798, p. 562.
† Idem Ibid. p. 574. ‡ Ibid. p. 573.

He adverted to the existing rebellion in Ireland, in speaking of which he observed precisely the same rule as he had followed in speaking of the French Revolution.—He expatiated upon the oppression of the *government*, and the *cruelty* of the regular troops, with the greatest vehemence and sensibility; but not a word did the atrocious tyranny and barbarity of the *rebels* extort from him!

Mr. Pitt entered into a full investigation of the many perverted facts, and erroneous principles, advanced by Mr. Fox.—Adverting to the question of *secession*, on which Mr. Fox had displayed great irritation, but little argument, Mr. Pitt observed that, as to the general principle, nothing could be more certain than that it was a violation of duty to desert a post which had been committed to his charge, and that in exact proportion to the danger of those for whom the charge was undertaken it increased. Now, it did so happen, that Mr. Fox could not, in his whole political career, have chosen a moment for secession more encompassed with danger, than the one in which he actually did secede. The motive, therefore, was at best suspicious, and the act of his declining to attend, under such circumstances, led at least to inquiry, whether by absenting himself he sought opportunities to

effect that, by inflaming the people without the walls of the House, which no exertion of his talents could achieve within. He retired just as the rancour of our enemy became most inveterate, and exclusively directed against this country; and when the manifestation of their malice called forth the spirit and zeal of all classes to support our national independence and honour. Mr. Fox had asserted his right to secede on his own motives of expediency, and, of course, those who surrounded him could not object to have their justification taken on the same principle; but Mr. Fox, it seemed, still retained his opinion of that expediency, and only now appeared, at the particular injunction of his constituents, to defend their local interest. How came it, then, that he appeared so surrounded with friends, who, adopting his principle of secession, had not, in the desire of their constituents, the same motive for his particular exception? Could any thing shew, in a stronger light, the blind acquiescence of party-zeal, when, in defiance of every avowed principle of their public conduct, they now attended to add to the splendour of their leader's entry? The bill passed by 196 votes against 71.

While the bill was in the committee, it experienced many improvements, by the insertion of various additional clauses; particularly

by one proposed by the Speaker for sanctioning the acceptance of voluntary contributions.—The principle of it was unquestionably good, as it professed to make every man contribute to the defence of the country, in proportion to his ability. The criterion, indeed, for ascertaining that ability, was far from sufficient; though, probably, it was as fair a criterion as could be safely adopted, at that time, on the introduction of a novel principle of taxation, by attempting to raise so large a portion of the supplies within the year. The bill, in its passage through the Lords, experienced the same violent opposition from Lord Holland, as it had met with from his uncle, in the Lower House. There was no epithet, expressive of censure and reprobation, which they did not both apply, as well to the principle on which it was founded, as to the mode adopted for carrying it into effect. Lord Holland did not hesitate to declare it worse, in point of principle, than any of the plans of Robespierre;—and he objected to a tax upon income, because, it must be, in most cases, a tax upon industry.* Yet, after a lapse of eight years, when the public danger was less, and the public burdens were greater, these very men did not scruple

* Woodfall's Reports, Jan. 9, p. 625.

to give their support to a measure, similar, indeed, in principle, but considerably greater in extent, and infinitely more burdensome in operation. After much debate, however, the bill passed through its different stages, and finally received the royal sanction on the twelfth of January.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Voluntary Contributions---Financial Arrangements---Plan for the redemption of the Land Tax proposed and explained by Mr. Pitt---Constitutional objections to it examined and confuted---Becomes a Law---Extraordinary motion of Mr. John Nicholl for applying all salaries *under* £2,000 a year to the use of the war---Mr. Pitt suggests the probability that the *motion* and *intention* of Mr. Nicholl are at variance---Mr. Nicholl insists that his motion is copied literally from a resolution which passed the House in the reign of William and Mary---That resolution, being read, proves to be directly opposite to the motion of Mr. Nicholl---Mr. Pitt shews that if the resolution had been as apposite as it was irrelevant, it could form no precedent, since it had been unanimously rejected by the House---Mr. Nicholl explains---Mr. Pitt combats the principle of the measure, and proves it to be oppressive and unjust---Motion withdrawn---Second Budget---Supplies---Ways and Means---New Loan---Measures of Defence---Threatened invasion of the country---Bill for the regulation of the Volunteer Force brought in to the House of Commons by Mr. Dundas---Passes without a division---Message from the Throne---Motion for an Address---Most ably seconded by Mr. Sheridan---His aspersions on the Ministry---Mr. Pitt's Speech---Address carried, in both Houses, unanimously---Bill for enabling

his Majesty to detain suspected Traitors--- Opposed by Mr. Sheridan--- Supported by Mr. Pitt--- Passed--- New Alien Bill--- Bill for manning the Navy by withdrawing protections--- Mr. Tierney pronounces a panegyric on Mr. Arthur O'Connor---Vouches for his loyalty and attachment to the Constitution---Alien Bill passed--- Debate on the Bill for withdrawing protections---Mr. Pitt's Speech--- Mr. Tierney opposes the Bill---Observations on his sentiments--- Mr. Pitt replies--- Imputes Mr. Tierney's opposition to the Bill to a desire to obstruct the defence of the country--- Mr. Tierney appeals to the Chair--- Indecision of the Speaker censured--- Mr. Pitt adheres to his first declaration---He receives a challenge from Mr. Tierney--- They fight a duel on Wimbledon Common, during Divine Service, on the Sunday after the debate---This transaction reprobated--- Misconduct of all the parties concerned, as well as of the House itself--- Mr. Wilberforce intends to make it the subject of a specific motion, but foregoes his purpose from the want of support--- Reflections on the event--- Bill to enable the English Militia to serve in Ireland--- Carried--- The Press--- Remarks on its importance--- Its profligacy at this period--- An English Newspaper in the pay of France--- Libel in the Morning Chronicle--- Condemned by the House of Lords---Motion for punishing the proprietor and printer---Lord Minto's Speech--- The Leaders of the Opposition panegyrize the Morning Chronicle---Inaccuracy of their assertions proved by extracts from that Paper--- Proprietor and printer sentenced to three months imprisonment in Newgate, and to pay a fine of £50 each--- The Debates on this question strongly illustrative of that spirit of party, which Mr. Pitt had to controul--- The Newspaper Bill--- Its object to preserve and secure the Liberty of the Press--- Libel in *the Courier*--- Newspapers rendered the Channel of Treasonable Communications to the Enemy---

Mr. Tierney states the result of a conversation with the *Editor of the Courier*---Lord Temple calls upon Mr. Tierney to name him---Reflections on the subject---Extraordinary answer of Mr. Tierney---Comments on his Speech---Lord Temple's call enforced by the Solicitor-General---Its propriety demonstrated by Mr. Windham, who represents *the Courier* to be a Paper "full of Sedition and Treason."---Mr. Tierney asks whether he means to say, that "he was connected with a Traitor."---Answered---Mr. Pitt's Speech on the Bill---Comments on an assertion of Mr. Erskine's at the Whig-Club---Dares him to support such an assertion in the House of Commons---Mr. Erskine does not accept the challenge---The Bill passes---Parliament prorogued.

[1798.] The clause which, on the proposal of Mr. Addington, had been introduced into the new bill for trebling the assessed taxes, or rather for levying a tax upon income, was productive of the happiest effects, not merely in supplying a large sum of money towards the exigencies of the state, but in affording the people an opportunity of displaying their zeal in support of their liberties and laws, which it was the avowed object of the enemy to subvert; and, in convincing that enemy, that every attempt to exhaust our finances would prove fruitless; and that, whatever his expectations of co-operation might be from the disaffected part of the community, the great body of the nation was sound, and resolved,

should he dare to put them to the test, to conquer or perish, in defence of the throne and the altar. Voluntary contributions flowed in from all ranks and descriptions of persons, from the highest to the lowest; and, notwithstanding the unprincipled efforts of the disaffected, and the profligate attempts of the newspapers, in the interest of the Opposition, to discourage individuals from standing forth, in support of their country, on this awful emergency, their amount was estimated by the Minister, in his detail of Ways and Means for the expences of the year, at no less a sum than ONE MILLION AND A HALF! In this generous answer to the appeal made to them by the legislature, did the people of Great Britain display the sincerity of their patriotism, the ardour of their zeal, and the firmness of their resolution.

As a part of his financial system, Mr. Pitt brought forward, on the second of April, a plan for the redemption of the Land Tax. This was a measure which he had taken infinite pains to prepare, and from which he cherished a sanguine hope that the most important advantages would result to the country. He stated the leading object of the plan to be an absorption of a great quantity of stock; the transfer of a considerable portion of the funded security

into landed security; and, by the redemption of the existing Land Tax, to purchase a quantity of stock more than equivalent to the amount of the tax. The tax would be made applicable in the same manner as before, but the proportion of stock, which it would purchase, would be one-fifth larger, presenting at once a considerable pecuniary gain to the public, and an advantage to the individual who should make the redemption. The chief recommendation of the plan, however, was, that it would diminish the capital of stock, and remove that which pressed more severely upon the country, than any inconveniences attendant on her present situation.

The actual amount of the existing Land Tax was computed at two millions per annum; and, if the whole of it were sold at twenty years' purchase, and the produce invested in a three per cent. stock, at fifty, it would yield eighty millions, affording an interest of two millions four hundred thousand pounds, and leaving a clear gain to the revenue of four hundred thousand pounds a year. At the same time the transaction would give a vast accession of strength to public credit, by taking eighty millions of stock out of the market. —The purchase, however, was to be varied, according to the fluctuations in the price of

stock. When stocks were at fifty, the tax would be bought at twenty years purchase; but for every variation of two and a half per cent. in the price of the stock, there was to be a corresponding variation of *one year's* purchase in the price of the tax. Thus, for instance, if the price of the three per cents. should be fifty-two and a half, twenty-one years produce would be required for the tax. This scale of variation would bring the tax up to thirty years purchase, when the price of the three per cents. should be seventy-five.

If the purchase were made, when the three per cents. were at fifty, the purchaser would have the advantage of receiving five per cent. interest for his money, on landed security. And the plan proposed, afforded every temptation to the owners of land, to sell a portion of it, in order to purchase the tax, provided it were inconvenient to advance the money without it. If a person possessed an estate of a thousand a year, paying a land-tax of fifty pounds, he might sell fifty pounds of his rent for fourteen or fifteen hundred pounds, (from twenty-eight to thirty years purchase) and would thus clear from four to five hundred pounds.

Every facility was afforded to the proprietors of land to become purchasers of their own

tax. They were, in the first instance, to have the right of pre-emption, as the land-tax, arising from any particular estate, was not to be offered for sale to third persons, until the expiration of a certain period, to be allowed to the proprietor of the land, to make his arrangements for the purchase. And even if third parties should become purchasers, it would not be irredeemable to the proprietor of the estate;—in that case, the liberty of redemption was only suspended to a given period, when, if the proprietor of the estate should be desirous to become the possessor of the land-tax arising out of it, he must replace, to the original purchaser, the same quantity of three per cent. stock which he paid as the price of his purchase.

A facility was also given to the *possessor* of land to become a purchaser. For which purpose the same power was allowed to the tenant for life, or in tail, to raise the money by burdening the property, as to the proprietor in fee, with a provision, however, that the money so raised should be strictly applied to the purchase of the tax. After Mr. Pitt had detailed the outlines of his plan to Parliament, he proceeded to consider some of the objections which had been already urged against it. It was obvious, that the measure proposed went to render the existing land tax perpetual, and

universally redeemable, and, where not immediately redeemable, always subject to redemption, under certain regulations. The first objection then was made on constitutional grounds. It was urged that, to render a grant perpetual which was now annual, was to remove the constitutional checks of Parliament over the public expenditure, and to make that perpetual which was now only voted as an annual supply. Nothing, however, could be more easy than to place, under the annual controul of Parliament, funds, now permanent, equivalent to those which would, by the operation of the bill proposed, be taken from under its controul. Certain branches of the consolidated fund might be made annual, even to a greater amount than two millions of land tax. This regulation would answer every purpose of constitutional controul; as Ministers, in such case, would not have it in their power to apply money without the consent of Parliament more than before. A particular clause was inserted in the bill to obviate this objection; by subjecting a still larger sum than the amount of the land tax to the annual disposal of Parliament.

The next objection to which Mr. Pitt directed his attention was this—that any measure which had for its object to perpetuate the existing land-tax, tended also to perpetuate

the existing inequality of that tax, which, by many, was considered as an abuse of no trifling magnitude. He observed, that no attempt whatever had been made, since the revolution, to remove the inequality complained of, and therefore, he asked if, with the experience of a century before them, they had witnessed no such attempt, it was more likely to be made, were the vote to be annual, than if the grant were made perpetual? He did not mean to justify that inequality, on the contrary, he thought it a defect in the original plan, that no provision was made for a periodical revision of it. But he could not admit that, after property had been so long transferred, under the existing inequality, it would be wise, just, or popular, to make a new valuation.

A third objection to the proposed measure was of a very different nature; for it was founded on its alledged tendency to produce an equalization of the land-tax; so that Mr. Pitt had to encounter opposite and contradictory objections. The question was, did the proposed measure give any new facility for the introduction of a general and equal land-tax? If it did give some new facility for employing the substantial resources of the country, and for deriving additional means of strength without distressing the people, he should be more

disposed to claim it as a recommendation, than to consider it as a defect. But it possessed no such recommendation. It left the question of a more equal repartition of the land-tax precisely where it found it. Parliament, at present, had the undoubted right to raise more than four shillings in the pound on land, and what greater authority would it acquire if the existing tax were redeemed? In the event of a total redemption it would be only necessary to provide that the amount of what had been redeemed should be deducted from any new impost; and such a provision would secure those who should take the benefit of redemption as much from any additional charge in future, on that account, as those who had not bought up their land-tax at all.

Having answered all the leading objections which had been opposed to his plan, he moved fifteen resolutions, which, being adopted by the House; he brought in a bill, on the 19th of April, for carrying them into legal effect. The subject underwent, in the various stages of the bill, that deep and deliberate discussion which its vast importance required; and the result of the investigation was the final sanction of the House, the bill being passed on the last day of May by a large majority. And on the 12th of the following month it passed the House of Lords.

Pending the discussions on the financial arrangements of the year, and while the public mind was considerably irritated by the artifices employed to excite discontent at Mr. Pitt's new project for raising a large portion of the supplies within the year, a motion had been brought forward, by Mr. John Nicholl, in the House of Commons, on the eighth of December, (1797) the tendency of which was to increase and extend this impression. The House being in a committee of ways and means, Mr. Nicholl moved, "That it is the opinion of this committee that the salaries, fees, and perquisites, of all the offices under the Crown, shall be applied to the use of the war, *except such as amount to £2000 per annum;* which are to be allowed to all officers whose salaries, fees, and perquisites, at present, exceed £2000 per annum. And also except that of the Lord Chancellor, the Speaker of the House of Commons, the Judges, *foreign* Ministers, and the commissioned officers of his Majesty's fleets and armies, or any persons who have a freehold interest in their respective offices."

Mr. Nicholl declared, that this motion was founded on a precedent in the reign of William and Mary; with this difference, that then the act extended to all salaries above £500 a year; whereas he meant to limit the application of his act to incomes exceeding

£2000. Unfortunately, however, the resolution was so worded as to convey a very opposite meaning, and, indeed, as to do the very reverse of that which Mr. Nicholl professed to have in view. For, had the House of Commons been as simple as the poor gentleman who introduced the question, and had adopted the resolution, it would have necessarily followed, that every office *under* £2000 a year must be abolished, and the salaries annexed to them be applied to the support of the war; or else the salaries must be raised to £2000 a year, by which means the national expence would be increased, and a necessity would arise for raising the sum equal to the amount of the former salaries, for *the use of the war*.

Mr. Pitt, however, with more generosity than can be generally expected from a political opponent, endeavoured to set Mr. Nicholl right; by suggesting to him the probability that the resolution, as it has been read by the clerk at the table, did not exactly mean what he seemed to have intended. As he (Mr. Pitt) had heard and understood it, and, he should rather suppose, as the House also must have understood it, it amounted simply to a proposal, that all salaries of office, but those of two thousand pounds a year value, (with the few exceptions stated) should be applied to the use

of the war. Now, whether such a measure was compatible with Mr. Nicholl's general notions of political economy, or in unison with the tenour of the principles which he professed; whether this was the way of making a distinction in favour of poverty against wealth, it was for that gentleman himself to judge, and Mr. Pitt wished him to reflect upon it. But, for his own part, it appeared to him to be so utterly incongruous with his usual sentiments, and so unlike to the precedent on which he had founded it, that he was led to believe Mr. Nicholl had made a small mistake;—if so, he should be sorry to take advantage of it, and, in candour, wished him to re-consider it, and to favour the committee with an explanation, and to tell them what it was that he really meant.

Mr. Nicholl however insisted, that Mr. Pitt had mistaken his meaning, and that the resolution would, by no means, justify the interpretation which he had put upon it. The resolution, therefore, was read again, when it evidently appearing, that it could bear no other intrepretation, the House indulged itself with a hearty laugh, at the expence of the unfortunate mover; who, nevertheless, very gravely assured the committee that he had copied the resolution, from that which passed in the time of William and Mary, word for word,

with the exceptions and alterations which he had already stated. At his request, the resolution of the 3d of William and Mary was read; when Mr. Pitt observed, that a more extraordinary misapplication of precedents had never, he believed, occurred, within or without those walls. If it should be made to appear, that such a resolution, as that just read, had been actually agreed to, and ratified by the House, in the reign of King William, to agree to another, at that time, directly opposite to it as the one proposed by Mr. Nicholl was, would, indeed, be a very extraordinary way of shewing respect for, and adherence to, precedents; but there was a reason, and, in Mr. Pitt's opinion, no mean one, why the House ought not to be altogether so much prejudiced by the boasted precedent of King William, as to be diverted from the true principle of the question before it, into a concurrence with the measure now proposed. If Mr. Nicholl had taken the pains to follow up the history of that resolution a few pages further, a gentleman of his perspicuity would, no doubt, have been able to discover that reason. The resolution, it was true, had been agreed to, *nemine contradicente*, and, being moved hastily, was not worded with strict grammatical accuracy. It so hap-

pened, however, that what was thus hastily voted without a dissentient voice, when it came to be deliberately investigated, was rejected without a division, as impolitic and absurd.' Mr. Pitt hoped, therefore, that gentlemen would not, out of prejudice, or from excess of fondness for precedent, adopt that measure which had never been adopted before, nor admit that which was held to be a good reason for rejecting it, in the time of King William to be a good reason for adopting it now.

Mr. Nicholl having, at length, clearly explained his meaning to be, that no salary under £2,000 should be affected by the measure, Mr. Pitt entered into a serious argument, in order to expose, which he did most successfully, both its injustice and its folly. He shewed, that its operation would be most partial, since, while it took from the man of £2,200 a year, but the eleventh part of his salary, it would take from others, a fourth, a third, a half, and even three-fourths of their income. Whatever interpretation might insidiously be given to his observations, and implicated, though he was himself in what he had to say on the subject, he did not hesitate to confess, and he said it with the candor, the confidence, and the firmness, which the occa-

sion demanded, that the principle on which he chiefly rested his objection to the imposition of a tax upon office, was this;—that official income was, less than any other species of income, given for the private enjoyment, or personal gratification, of those who received it. To such as viewed them abstractedly, the situations of persons high in office appeared splendid, and envy and malignity ascribed to them an excess of private gratification which they never experienced, and of personal repose which they never enjoyed. The situation of a younger brother, whose public station conferred upon him the means, and imposed upon him the necessity, of maintaining an appearance equal to those of great hereditary rank and property, was looked up to with stupid malevolence, and viewed with an eye of envious exaggeration; but any one who considered the situation of such persons with impartial views, and attentively examined how much of their income was applied to personal gratification, would find that, in that respect, they were much below the general class of opulent society; that the far greater part of their expenditure was a tribute to the station which they filled, and to that appearance which it was necessary for them to maintain, in order to support an equality with those whom hereditary wealth had elevated to

the highest ranks in the community. If, in a free country like this, the persons who held offices of the greatest trust and responsibility were to be selected as objects of taxation, it would, indeed, be extraordinary. But if it were so, and, in the evil spirit of such a principle, they were to be divested of their income, and with it exempted from the necessity of preserving the splendour of their appearance, what would they lose? Nothing intrinsically gratifying;—no, not one hour's personal enjoyment, out of the four and twenty, would be abridged by such a defalcation.*

Mr. Pitt, after pressing a variety of forcible observations on the House, on the absurdity of the measure, lastly, considered the object it was intended to accomplish. It was proposed as a punishment on Ministers for past, or as a correction for future, errors. But was that, he asked, the principle of the boastful patriot—the reformer?—Was it the extent of his purity to avow, that he brought forward a measure, not on the broad bottom of its own merit, but with a view to give Ministers such an interest in the attainment of peace, as would induce them, without consideration of the means

* Woodfall's Parliamentary Reports, December 8, 1797, p. 325—331.

or the consequences, and without regard to their public duty, but merely for their own private purposes, to obtain a peace? If the war had been commenced in error, prosecuted with feebleness, and continued in corrupt obstinacy, he still conjured the House not to adopt a bad measure in order to punish the authors of it, or to correct their future conduct, but to address the King to remove them from his councils, as legislators; not to make the private interest of Ministers a temptation to them to be guilty of a violation of their public faith, and of a breach of their duty, and, from sordid, corrupt, and undue, motives, to sacrifice the dearest interests of their country.

Mr. Curwen and Mr. Tierney kindly stepped forward to relieve Mr. Nicholl from the confusion and embarrassment which his blunder had created; but as neither they, nor any other member, had the boldness to second his motion, he thought it most prudent to request leave to withdraw it, which the House indulgently granted.

In order to complete the financial arrangements of the year, Mr. Pitt brought forward a second budget on the twenty-fifth of April.—It appeared, from his statement, that, on account of the additional exertions which it had been deemed necessary to make for the

defence of the kingdom, the expences of the year would exceed his former estimate by something more than three millions, making a total of £28,490,000. The specific amount of the excess on each particular article was:—Navy £910,000, making a total of £13,488,888;—Army £274,365, total £12,857,315;—Ordnance £12,541, total £1,303,580;—Miscellaneous £7,608, total £680,688;—For the reduction of the national debt £200,000.—Total of the supplies £28,490,391. He next proceeded to state the variations in the Ways and Means for supplying a sum adequate to this increased expence; and, in so doing, he particularly noticed the reduction which it had been found necessary to make in the article of the assessed taxes, to the amount of two millions and a half. This, however, he expected would, to a certain extent, be supplied by the voluntary contributions, which he justly considered as indicative of the approbation of their constituents of the conduct of the House, and of the conviction of the country of the necessity of exertions adequate to the exigency of the times. He then adverted to a novel regulation which would be productive of some increase of the revenue, besides being pregnant with other public benefits. This was the adoption of certain regulations respecting the convoy of our

trade, and the consequent imposition of a certain tax upon exports and imports, in such a manner as not to risk the diminution of our commerce; a tax, too, which would be repaid by the decrease of the price of insurance; which would fall upon the consumer, and diminish the number of prizes which our extended commerce had afforded the enemy an opportunity of making. After some brief comments on other less material objects, Mr. Pitt thus recapitulated the Ways and Means for the year:— Produce of land and malt £2,750,000;—Assessed taxes £4,500,000;—Exports and Imports £1,500,000;—Lottery £200,000;—Advance on Exchequer Bills by the Bank £3,000,000;—The Loan £15,000,000.—Making a Total of £28,450,000.

Mr. Pitt then explained the terms of the loan, by which it appeared that the subscribers had advanced their money on terms highly advantageous to the public, as they did not receive, in stock, more than £99. 12s. for every hundred pounds; depending for their profit on the discount to be allowed for prompt payment, or the advantage arising from the saving of interest if the money were paid by instalments. The sum to be provided for the payment of the interest upon seven millions of the loan, (the assessed taxes being intended

to pay off the remainder,) and upon a part of the unfunded navy debt, was £763,000.

The first object of increased taxation was Salt, upon which he proposed to levy an impost of five shillings per bushel, instead of half a crown, which it then paid. He calculated that this would fall but lightly on the poorer classes, whose consumption, in general, did not exceed half a bushel yearly. His observations were highly judicious on the subject of making the poorer classes of society contribute, according to their ability, to the support of the war,—a subject which had never undergone a proper discussion; for the pitiful attempt *ad captandum vulgus* appears to have too frequently rendered the acquisition of popularity the *primary* object in the discharge of the high and arduous duties of a Minister of Finance. Hence had arisen, on the part of the lower orders of the people, a most mistaken and pernicious notion, alike destructive of every impulse of patriotism, and of every principle of duty, that the legislature had no right to call upon them to contribute to the defence of the state, and that they had no stake whatever in the country. Impressed, no doubt, with this idea, Mr. Pitt hoped that, if any man should tell them, that they were heavily taxed, he would tell them, likewise, that, if the nobleman, if the man of property, if, indeed, all the higher classes of the

community, were interested in the present contest, they could not be more so than the lower orders were;— that there was no man in the social state more deeply interested in the contest than he who was doomed to subsist on the produce of his labour; that it was a contest which involved the happiness of the lower orders more immediately than that of any other; that the French Revolution had been followed up by a system of flattery and pride, to the passions of the lower class, while its effects had proved utterly destructive of their comfort; that of all descriptions of men in Europe, none had been more unhappily the dupes and victims of such a system, than the honest, the laborious, but too credulous, husbandman and mechanic; a system which had filled the greater part of Europe, indeed, with an equal portion of misery and disgrace: The other taxes proposed, were five per cent. upon all tea above half a crown per pound, which would produce £110,000; a tax upon armorial bearings, to yield £150,000; and these, added to the new duty upon salt, which was estimated at £503,000, would produce a total of £764,000.

After some few observations from different members, more with a view to obtain explanations, than to start objections, the several resolutions were put and agreed to by the com-

mittee. The report was received on the following day; bills, pursuant to the different resolutions, were brought into the House, and passed into laws, without any further discussion or observation, of moment, except on the question of exports and imports, on which some debate occurred, on the sixteenth of May, the result of which was that no British ship, registered, should be permitted to sail without a convoy, unless by special license from the Lords Commissioners of the Admiralty, and the regulation of the proposed impost in the following proportions:— One-half per cent. on British manufactures exported to any part of Europe;— two per cent. on goods exported to the West Indies, or to America;— and three per cent. on goods imported. A further duty was imposed on tonnage varying according to circumstances. — The total amount of the tax on exports and imports was estimated at £1,170,000; and that on tonnage at £208,000; making together £1,378,000.

Such were the financial arrangements for the service of the year; and, next to these, the object which principally engaged the attention of Mr. Pitt, at this period, was the defence of the country against the threatened attacks of the enemy. As France had experienced from Great Britain the only effectual

opposition which she had hitherto encountered, her rulers carefully investigated the means of doing her the most serious injury, and founded their hopes on the destruction of her public credit, on the strength of her internal factions, and on the success of a meditated invasion.—Their expectations of the ruin of her credit were derived, in a great measure, from the assertions and declarations of those who contended, that the substitution of one representative property for another was synonimous with bankruptcy. Unfounded apprehensions had, as has been seen, withdrawn from the Bank, much greater quantities of gold than usual. From these apprehensions, and the consequences which they had produced, the national repository, with all its store of assets, so infinitely above all demands upon it, was obliged to have recourse to another medium, but equally valuable as to every purpose of property. By those who either misapprehended the nature of money, the sign of commodities, or who wilfully misrepresented the case, the Bank was affirmed to be insolvent. This opinion, advanced by men of great talents, supported by all the minor satellites of disaffection, and disseminated in those publications, which were most certain to meet the eyes of domestic and foreign enemies, had

evidently great weight in nourishing the hopes of the French government; besides the misconceptions and mistatements arising from the Bank's change of representative signs. The object of the financial measures adopted during this Session was to support that credit which domestic and foreign enemies thus laboured to destroy. That being attained, it next became necessary to provide efficient means for opposing an invasion from France.

Considered in itself, and in relation to the force and manifest energy of this country, the project was most extravagant and hopeless.—But the French were flushed with their success on the Continent, and were not disposed to admit the difference, obvious and even striking as it was, between the powers whom they had hitherto subdued, and that with which they had still to contend. Conscious, however, of their own inferiority on that great element which divides them from Britain, they supposed that they could elude her fleets, and then overpower her inhabitants by their armies. To the Cabinet of the Luxemburgh the loss of men appeared an object beneath their consideration. Unless they employed their troops on some foreign service, they knew they must be a burden to the country, and a terror to the government. Inured to licentiousness, and accustomed

to plunder, their army must have some scene of depredation in view, to keep their expectations alive, and to check any disposition to mutiny or revolt. In the gasconading spirit of their country, the Directory professed to entertain no doubt of success, and even, for facilitating the accomplishment of their rash project, they opened a loan which the spoils of England were to repay.

The preparations, in the French ports, for carrying this plan into effect, made it an indispensable duty, on the part of the Minister, to adopt every possible precaution for rendering their attempts abortive. Accordingly, on the 27th of March, a plan of defence was submitted to the House of Commons by Mr. Dundas, who brought in a bill to regulate the employment of the volunteers, to prevent confusion in the field, to provide for the removal of cattle and other things, in the event of an invasion, and to indemnify persons who might suffer injury in their property by the operation of such measures. The House was so struck with the necessity of this plan, that little debate, and no opposition, occurred in its progress through its various stages.—It formed only a part of the scheme of internal defence which the Ministers deemed it expe-

dient, in the actual situation of the country, to adopt.

The traitorous machinations of the united Irishmen, and their correspondence with societies of a similar description in England, rendered the exertions of extraordinary vigilance and circumspection necessary; and sanctioned the adoption of measures, which, in ordinary times, no Minister would propose, and no Parliament support. But it constitutes the chief excellence of the British Constitution, that it contains within itself a principle of self-preservation, by facilitating the formation of laws to meet every possible exigency as it arises, and to repel every possible danger as it occurs; without any risk that the means pursued for the security of the venerable fabric will injure its foundations.

In pursuit of this grand object, a message from the Throne was presented to both Houses of Parliament, on the 20th of April, in which his Majesty informed the members, that, from various advices which he had received, it appeared, that preparations for the embarkation of troops and warlike stores were carried on with considerable and increasing activity in the ports of France, Flanders, and Holland, with the avowed design of attempting the invasion of the British dominions, and that, in this design, the enemy was encouraged by the com-

munications and correspondence of traitorous and disaffected persons and societies in these kingdoms. His Majesty expressed his full reliance in the bravery of his fleets and armies, and in the zeal, public spirit, and unshaken courage, of his people, already manifested in the voluntary exertions of all ranks of his subjects for the general defence, more than ever necessary at a moment when they were called upon to defend all that was most dear to them. The two Houses were informed, that the King had given directions to draw out the regiments of provisional cavalry, which had been raised in pursuance of an act of the preceding session; and that it was also his Majesty's intention to order the part not yet embodied, of the augmentation made to the militia, under another act of the same session, to be forthwith embodied and drawn out.

His Majesty farther declared, that he felt it incumbent on him to make the fullest use of the extensive means provided by Parliament for the national defence; but he felt it necessary, at the same time, under the circumstances stated, to recommend it to Parliament to consider, without delay, of such further measures as might enable him to defeat the wicked machinations of disaffected persons within these

realms, and to guard against the designs of the enemy, either abroad or at home.

On the motion for an address to the King upon this message, Mr. Sheridan again stood forward, and, in a most eloquent speech, expressed his full conviction of the necessity of exerting every nerve to resist the common enemy. He made several wise and just observations, on the extent of the Royal Prerogative, which he truly decribed as amply sufficient, of itself, to justify the measure of calling forth the armed population of the country, in the event of a threatened invasion. While, however, he praised the spirit and alacrity displayed by the country, he could not so far forget his accustomed habits, as not to mingle the patriotic sentiments which his speech contained, with some attacks on the Ministers, to whom, as usual, he most unjustly ascribed, what he called, "*the wrongs and sufferings of the people.*" Nor, while he strongly deprecated the consequences of a French invasion, and deplored the alarming increase of French power, could he so far do violence to his principles, as to forbear an expression of his joy, "at the establishment of the French Republic, and at its *glorious efforts* to be free;" nor yet a repetition of the oft-confuted falsehood that France "had grown gigantic from the efforts which the allied powers exerted to *oppress*

its infant liberty." He did not attempt, however, to adduce any argument, much less any proof, in support of this extraordinary assertion, which tended to convert resistance of unprovoked aggression into oppression of infant liberty!

Mr. Pitt expressed his admiration of the energy, the vigour, the manliness, and the eloquence, displayed in Mr. Sheridan's speech, with which he was so well satisfied that he forbore to comment on those parts of it to which he could not assent. He was too well pleased at the change which had taken place in that gentleman's sentiments, respecting the conduct which this country ought to observe towards France, to investigate the grounds of that change. Adverting to an observation of Mr. Sheridan's, that much might be known to government which could not be known to him; Mr. Pitt remarked, that it was strictly true. Much was known to government which could not be known to him; but the country at large knew, that there existed a body of men, too considerable in number and activity for government to pass by unnoticed; men who were going on for the daring purpose of correspondence with the French, for establishing a system of republicanism in this country, under the auspices of a foreign force. The existence of this conspiracy was

confirmed by the conduct of our enemies; there were none of their proceedings, none of the speeches of their leaders, to animate the troops to the invasion of this country, no temptation to make their armies embark, no endeavour to prevail upon their scanty marine to try their feeble efforts, that was not followed up with the hope of success, by the co-operation of domestic traitors.—The address passed without a dissentient voice in both Houses, and that very night a bill was brought in and passed by the House of Lords, which was, in fact, a renewal of the former act, "to empower his Majesty to secure and detain such persons as he may suspect to be conspiring against his person and government." The bill was immediately brought to the Commons, and, after a desultory debate, in which Mr. Sheridan expressed his disbelief of the imputed conspiracy, on the ground that the French were not worthy of credit, and Mr. Pitt combated his opposition, as false in its principle, futile in its application, and inconsistent with the sentiments which Mr. Sheridan had just avowed; it was read three times, and passed, with only *five* dissentient voices, before the House separated;—and the next day it received the Royal assent.

In addition to these precautions, two other measures, forming a part of the same system of

policy, were deemed necessary;—an alien bill, and a bill for more effectually manning the navy. While the House was in a committee on the first of these bills, Mr. Tierney, who was one of the five who had given their negative to the act for detaining suspicious persons, entered into an irregular justification of his vote upon that occasion, which it was certainly the duty of the Speaker to stop in the outset. He attacked Mr. Windham, for having alluded to a treasonable conspiracy, at a time when a person was imprisoned on a charge of high treason. He accused him of more inhuman conduct than he had ever before witnessed. But it is remarkable, that, though there were several persons imprisoned under the same charge, Mr. Tierney's expression of resentment and concern appears to have related to only one object. And, seemingly impressed with the excellence of the old adage, "A friend in need is a friend indeed;" he pronounced an eulogy on Mr. O'Connor, to whom he declared himself to be a friend; and added, that he should continue such until he should be convicted. He had lived long on terms of friendship with him, and he had never met with a more intelligent man; and, in all the conversations which he had ever had with him, *he found nothing in him that was contrary to the constitution of his country*;—nay, he

declared, that the political professions of Mr. O'Connor *were perfectly consistent with his own sentiments*;—and that, if there were any man on earth whom he did not think a traitor, that man was Mr. Arthur O'Connor.* The bill, with little opposition, passed into a law.

More debate, however, arose on the other bill, for more effectually manning the navy, which was introduced by Mr. Pitt, on the 25th of May, and which gave birth to a remarkable incident in his life. He observed, that a similar bill had passed in the year 1779, and that its object was to suspend, for a limited time, the protections which various descriptions of persons enjoyed, to prevent them from being impressed into the service of the navy. If the House had felt no hesitation to adopt this measure at that time, in the second year of a war, when Spain and Holland were united, they would surely not hesitate to pronounce the renewal of it still more justifiable under the

* On the 21st of May, 1798, Mr. Arthur O'Connor, and four others, were indicted for high treason, at Maidstone; the trial lasted two days, when O'Coigley was found guilty, and the rest of the prisoners were acquitted. Mr. O'Connor, however, was detained in custody, and conveyed to Ireland, on another charge of the same nature; he there made an ample confession of his guilt, and was banished from his native country for life.

present alarming circumstances of the country. The House, he said, must also be sensible, that, if the situation of the country were such as to induce it to pass the bill, it must, from its nature, be necessary to pass it without delay;—it was his wish, therefore, that the bill should pass that day through its different stages, with a suitable pause at each, if required; and that it should be sent to the Lords for their concurrence. The bill of 1779 had passed with similar expedition, and he trusted that would be considered as a sufficient precedent.

It was observed by Mr. Tierney, that, however the proposed measure might be prudent and good in itself, the very extraordinary manner in which Mr. Pitt called upon the House to adopt it could not fail to excite great alarms in their minds; such, at least, was the effect which it had produced on his. He had imagined that the augmentation of the navy was to be provided for in the usual way; or, that, if any uncommon mode were to be resorted to for the attainment of that object, some intimation of it would be given to the House. When the precipitancy with which it was required to pass this bill had been urged on the suspension of the Habeas-Corpus act, Mr. Pitt condescended to use some arguments to prove it necessary; but, in the present case, no reason nor argument

whatever was adduced. It was impossible for those who might be in possession of the protections in question to secrete themselves; indeed, the manner of going about it was altogether so extraordinary and objectionable, that he felt himself under the necessity of giving it his negative. He had heard no argument that proved its propriety, he knew of no sudden emergency that urged its necessity;—even if he had, some time ought to have been allowed him to weigh the force of such arguments, and to examine the nature of such an emergency, before he proceeded to give three or four votes on a measure of which no notice whatever had been given; and of which no idea had ever entered his mind.

'If ever there were a measure submitted to Parliament, of a nature to preclude the necessity of argument, and to bear, on the very face of it, the most glaring impropriety of any previous notice, it was assuredly the measure in question. The country was threatened with an immediate invasion;—the fact was notorious;—it had been announced to Parliament by the King. It was the obvious duty, then, of the Minister, to make every possible preparation for resisting and defeating such an attempt; and, more particularly so, to man, without delay, every vessel that was fit to be sent to sea. All

that *pressing* could do had already been done; and a sufficient supply of hands had not been procured. It was known, that a great number of able men sheltered themselves against the effects of a press-warrant, by the protections which had, on various occasions, been granted; and without which they would have been subjected to the same process by which their fellow-seamen had been obtained for the service of their country. As the navy could not be manned with sufficient expedition for the purpose for which it was wanted, unless these protections were withdrawn, it was, obviously, the imperative duty of the Minister to urge the Parliament to withdraw them. The necessity of the measure, therefore, though Mr. Tierney professed not to perceive it, was evident and striking. But if Mr. Pitt had previously apprized the House of the nature of his intended motion, the very notice itself would have defeated his object; for, it is most certain, that the persons enjoying the protection would have immediately profited by the premature and imprudent publication of the measure, to absent themselves from the places of their usual residence, and to elude the vigilance of the officers employed to search for them. The alledged *impossibility* of secreting themselves, so confidently urged by Mr. Tierney, without, however,

a single argument to prove the justice of the allegation, stood contradicted by fact; experience having sufficiently demonstrated the facility of concealment, where such powerful motives subsisted for procuring it. It was clear, therefore, that the measure, to be rendered effective, could only be carried in the manner proposed by Mr. Pitt.

But Mr. Tierney, at the close of his speech, was thrown off his guard, and assigned the real motive of his opposition to the bill, and which must have operated equally on his mind, in whatever way it had been introduced to the notice of the House. If Mr. Pitt, he said, persisted in hurrying the bill through the House in the manner proposed, he must give it his decided negative, (however reluctantly he opposed any measure that was said to be necessary for the safety of the country)—*for*, (from what he had lately seen) he must view *all* the measures of Ministers as hostile to the liberty of the subject; and the present measure he regarded with peculiar jealousy, as it went directly to rob them of the few remaining privileges which they were still permitted to enjoy.*

Thus, it is clear, that Mr. Tierney's motive

* Woodfall's Parliamentary Reports, May 25, 1798, p. 561.

for opposing the bill was its alledged hostility to the liberty of the subject; and, as the bill contained nothing complex, and difficult to be understood, but a simple proposal to withdraw certain protections, the same motive must have produced the same opposition, whether the bill was hurried through the House with a precipitation justified by the emergency, or whether six months had been allowed for the discussion of its principle and object. A single reading of the bill must have been sufficient to shew whether, or no, it was hostile to the liberty of the subject;—Mr. Tierney had decided that it was so; and, as it was not of a nature to admit of modification, or change, delay, though it would have effectually defeated the object of the bill itself, could not have secured his support. It must, therefore, be concluded that a desire to weigh the force of arguments, or to examine the nature of the emergency, constituted no part of the motive which induced him to propose such delay.

Mr. Pitt, in reply, observed, that if every measure, adopted against the designs of France, were to be considered as hostile to the liberty of this country, then, indeed, his idea of liberty differed very widely from that which seemed to be entertained by Mr. Tierney. He reminded

the House, that, notwithstanding Mr. Tierney's assertion to the contrary, he had given notice of his intention, though he had not explained the precise object of his motion. It could not be fairly supposed that the present measure was to be brought forward, as the usual one, for augmenting the navy, as a bill for that purpose had been introduced ten days before, when he stated to the House, that, if they acceded to the proposed augmentation of the navy, they must adopt some vigorous measure to render that augmentation effectual, as nothing but a law of a rigorous nature could succeed in making the number of seamen complete.—After some other observations on the futility of Mr. Tierney's objections, Mr. Pitt asked, if the measure were necessary, and if a notice of it would enable its objects to elude its effect, how could Mr. Tierney's opposition to it be accounted for, but from a desire to obstruct the defence of the country?

So natural was the inference implied in this question, that, if the premises were admitted, the conclusion could not be denied. Mr. Tierney, however, did not dispute the premises, but called Mr. Pitt to order, and, appealing to the Speaker, said, "This language, Sir, is surely not parliamentary, and upon you only, Sir, can I call for protection." It was to

be expected that, in answer to this direct appeal, the Speaker, who is the guardian of order and decorum in the House, and who is, in the first instance, the judge of what is orderly and decorous, would have declared his opinion of the expression objected to. Instead of doing this, however, he contented himself with observing, that whatever had a *tendency* to throw suspicion on the sentiments of a Member, *if* conveyed in language that clearly marked that *intention*, such language was, without doubt, irregular, and unparliamentary; but *if* it argued no such intention, there was no room for censuring it as disorderly; *if*, therefore, it was the opinion of *the House*, that such was the fair import of the language used by Mr. Pitt, they would judge of it accordingly, but they would first wait to hear Mr. Pitt's explanation.* The Speaker, here, did nothing more than state a general principle, without applying it, as he ought to have done, to the particular case which called for his interposition. And it is much to be lamented, that he did not give his clear and direct opinion, whether the language of Mr. Pitt was parliamentary or unparliamentary, as such a deci-

* Woodfall's Reports, ubi suprà.

sion might, probably, have prevented the disgraceful scene which ensued.

Mr. Pitt said, that he feared the House must wait a long time, if they waited for his explanation on the present subject. The sense of what he advanced was, that there was no distinction between the two cases in question. That, if notice were to be given of the measure under consideration, that notice would only serve to elude its execution; and, therefore, no man could be justified to himself in opposing the necessary expedition, which was to make the measure effectual; and, if he did oppose it, he must surely appear to obstruct the measure employed for the defence of the country. He knew very well, that it was unparliamentary to state the motives which actuated the opinions of Members, but it was impossible to go into arguments, in favour of a question, without sometimes hinting at the motives which influenced an opposition to it. He concluded by submitting to the judgment of the House the propriety and necessity of the arguments which he had urged, and he would not depart from any thing which he had advanced, by either retracting or explaining them. Nothing more was said upon this subject, at the time, and the bill having been read three times, was sent to the House of Lords,

who passed it the same day, and the next it received the royal assent.

The day after this debate Mr. Tierney sent a challenge to Mr. Pitt; the consequence of which was, that four of the Members of the House of Commons, whose peculiar duty it is to enforce, in all respects, a rigid observance of those laws which they are themselves employed in preparing and forming, and to set an example of obedience, decency, and decorum, to others, met on the *Sunday* following (May the 27th) to profane, in the grossest manner, *the Lord's Day*, by the perpetration of an act repugnant alike to the precepts of God, and the laws of the country. At three o'clock; *during the time of divine service*, Mr. Pitt, attended by Mr. Dudley Rider, and Mr. Tierney, accompanied by General Walpole, fought a duel on Wimbledon Common. The former received his adversary's fire, which, fortunately for the nation, failed to produce the intended effect, and discharged his own pistol in the air; when the seconds, in explanation of that Gothic code, which is not more repugnant to religion, than revolting to common sense, since it subjects the party injured to the same danger with the aggressor, declared that sufficient *satisfaction* had been given; though it would have

puzzled a philosopher to discover in what the satisfaction consisted.*

This transaction was disgraceful to all the parties concerned in it; but most so to Mr. Pitt; since, however ordinary men might be excused, by the pliant courtesy of a weak and degenerate age, for an easy compliance with a custom to which ignorance and fashion had given the stamp and currency of honour, a mind like *his*, cast in no common mould, should have risen superior to a low and unworthy prejudice, the folly of which it must have perceived, and the wickedness of which it must have acknowledged.—Could Mr. PITT be led away by that *false shame* which subjects the decisions of reason to the controul of fear, and renders the admonitions of conscience sub-

* There were some peculiar circumstances attending this transaction, which added to the disgrace which attached to it. At the precise time when the parties met in the field, a woman of fashion, who was connected with the opposition, exclaimed, to some company who were present, "This is the important moment!" The emphasis and gesticulation which accompanied the exclamation sufficed to *characterise* the importance attached to the meeting. How the lady acquired her knowledge of a business, which the parties concerned generally deem it necessary to conduct with the greatest possible secrecy, can be easily conjectured by those who recollect the marked virulence of that party-spirit which prevailed, to so great an extent, at this period.

servient to the powers of ridicule?—Could he stoop to act a part which his judgment condemned, merely to escape the jest which he despised, or to avoid the censure which he disdained? If so, the despotism of custom, and the tyranny of prejudice, must speedily establish an universal sway on the wrecks of morality, and the ruins of religion. If no higher sentiment had intervened, a feeling of *patriotism* should have deterred him from rashly and unnecessarily risking a life which was specially devoted to the service of his country. It is with regret that I dwell on what I must consider as a blot in his life; but it would be a breach of duty slightly to pass over an instance of misconduct, which, under the sanction of his name, might be quoted as a precedent, and adopted as an example.

The House of Commons were not less blameable than the parties themselves. It most certainly behoved them either to pass their censure on the language which served as a pretext for this degrading scene, if they deemed it censurable, or to support the propriety of it by an express declaration, if they judged it proper. That duty which they neglected to discharge, it is reserved for the historian to perform. It must be observed, then, that where motives are fairly imputable from language and

conduct, the imputation of them becomes almost a matter of necessity; and it is a recorded truth, that the Members of Opposition, in either House, scarcely ever refrained from imputing to their political adversaries the very worst of motives, and from lavishing on them every abusive epithet, even where no impartial auditor could discern any fair ground of imputation. But they seem to have thought, that they had an exclusive right of censure, a patent for invective, a monopoly of abuse. And, if any one had the presumption to invade their privilege, they evinced the utmost rage, and death itself appeared, in their estimation, to be a punishment not too severe for such a violation of their charter! In the present instance, if the matter were coolly considered, and impartially examined, there would be little difficulty in deciding which of the parties had the most reasonable ground of complaint,—he who was charged with a systematic attempt to rob his fellow-countrymen of their liberties, or he who was accused of acting as if he desired to obstruct the defence of his country! It might, with propriety too, be asked, how a man, who could so far forget the duties of a representative as to declare that *he had a general retainer against the Ministry*, and that *he never would vote one shilling of the supplies*, could

expect to have his motives pass without suspicion, or could think himself injured by an inference which was the clear and necessary result of his declarations and conduct?'

There was but one Member who exhibited the smallest indication of being impressed with a *just sense* of this transaction, both as it respected the House in particular, and the public in general. On the Wednesday following, Mr. Wilberforce declared his intention of bringing it before Parliament, with a view to prevent the recurrence of a similar disgrace; but finding, probably, no member disposed to second him in this laudable undertaking, and not feeling sufficient resolution to discharge his duty, without a promise of support, the matter was dropped.

One other measure connected with the internal defence of the kingdom, was brought forward, on the nineteeth of June, by Mr. Dundas. A formidable rebellion was, at this period, raging in Ireland, and several actions had taken place between the Rebels and the King's troops. During these conflicts, a considerable number of the English Militia had volunteered their services for the suppression of the rebellion. And, in the actual state of the country, Ministers felt it their duty to bring the matter before Parliament. Accord-

ingly it was communicated to both Houses, by a Message from the Throne, and a Bill was brought into the House of Lords to enable his Majesty to accept the offer of such Militia regiments as should be willing to serve in Ireland. The bill was opposed by two descriptions of men:—first, by some of the country gentlemen who held commissions in the Militia, on the ground that the measure had a tendency to alter the nature of that constitutional force, by discouraging persons of rank and property from engaging in such a service.— And, secondly, by some of the leaders of the Opposition in both Houses, who appeared adverse to any measures of coercion against armed rebels, and disposed to inquire into the origin and cause of the rebellion, with a view to ascertain whether it was *justifiable* or not.* The bill, however, was approved by the great majority of Parliament, and, on the twenty-first of June, it passed the Commons, having previously passed the Upper House.

Of the miscellaneous business of the present Session, the proceedings respecting *the press*, are, from the importance of the subject itself, particularly worthy of notice. Indeed,

* See the Speeches of Mr. Sheridan, Mr. Jekyll, and others, on the 19th and 21st of June, 1798, in Woodfall's Parliamentary Reports.

there is no one circumstance connected with the internal polity of a state, which requires a greater exertion of skill, wisdom, and attention, to regulate, than *the freedom of the press.* This has been called the grand bulwark of a free state; and, when it is subject to proper regulations, the character is unquestionably just. It promotes that communication of individual ideas, which enlarges the stock of general knowledge; and it encourages that collision of sentiment whence the sparks of truth so frequently elicit. While, however, the beneficial effects of the freedom of the press cannot be too highly valued, or too loudly extolled, it must not be forgotten that it is a *relative* and not a *positive* good; in other words, that it is good only inasmuch as it tends to serve the cause of religion and civil liberty. Whenever it injures these, it loses its character, it forfeits its attributes, and becomes a serious evil;—the blessing is then converted into a curse. In the same manner, civil liberty itself, which is good only as it promotes the welfare and happiness of mankind, when carried to excess, degenerates into the most ferocious and insupportable tyranny. Hence arises the necessity of legislative restrictions for the correction of such excess. And the same consideration imposes the same duty on the legislature when-

ever the licentiousness of the press leads to the perversion of its object, and threatens the loss of its advantages. To prevent the *abuse* of a thing from becoming destructive of its *use* constitutes one of the first duties of a Minister, and, at the same time, a duty which it is most difficult to discharge.

Two circumstances combined to render the regulation of the press an object of greater consequence at this time, than it was at any former period. The first of these was the French Revolution, in which the press was employed, as the most ready and most potent instrument, for subverting the established religion and government of the country. The second, was the vast increase of periodical publications in this country, but particularly of newspapers, which had a material effect in biassing the public opinion, and, indeed, in forming the public mind, on many points of national importance. In all former times, when Great Britain was engaged in a war, the conductors of English papers never so far lost sight of the spirit of Englishmen, nor of their duty as subjects, as to espouse the cause of the enemies of their country. But, unhappily, the new principles which the founders of the French Revolution had set afloat in the world, had so far infected a numerous description of periodical writers, in every

country, as to render them regardless of every duty, and to convert many of them into the advocates of rebellion and regicide. England, unfortunately, had not escaped the general infection; and it was, in consequence, seen, for the first time, that men, boasting the name, and enjoying the privileges, of Englishmen, enlisted, without a blush, under the banners of the enemy, and openly pleaded their cause, with equal zeal and assurance. Nay, the profligate spirit of the times was carried still further;—for there existed a paper, at this period, published daily in the metropolis of the British Empire, notoriously in the pay of the French government, with which its proprietor, through the medium of an agent at Calais, maintained a regular correspondence;—and, although the importation and sale of English papers were generally prohibited by a legislative order, an office was publicly announced at Paris, for the sale of the particular paper in question.

The violence of these papers gave birth to two proceedings in Parliament, one a *judicial*, the other a *legislative*, measure. On the 21st of March, Lord Minto directed the attention of the House of Lords to a paragraph which had appeared, two days before, in a daily print, the Morning Chronicle, reflecting upon the honour of that House. It was, on his Lord-

ship's motion, read to the House as follows:—
"The House of Lords must now be admitted to be highly important as a political assembly, notwithstanding it has, of late, appeared to be nothing more than a chamber where the Minister's edicts are registered for form's sake. Some of their Lordships are determined to vindicate their importance. It is there that the dresses of the Opera dancers are regulated! One of the Roman Emperors recommended to the Senate, when they were good for nothing else, to discuss what was sauce for a turbot. To regulate the length of a petticoat is a much more genteel employment." This paragraph was resolved to be a gross and scandalous libel upon the House, and the proprietor and printer, James Perry, and John Lambert, having been brought before the House, were asked what they had to say in their own defence. Lambert expressed his sorrow at having unintentionally inserted the paragraph which had offended the House; and Perry declared his utter ignorance of the paragraph, until complaint was made of it, and he therefore hoped for that clemency, which was the characteristic of the dignified and moral justice of their Lordships. When they had withdrawn, Lord Minto accused the Morning Chronicle of a systematic endeavour to undermine the constitution of Great Britain,

by its panegyrics on the doctrine of anarchy and terror, brought forward for discussion by the revolution in France; and was proceeding to prove that even the war itself might, in some degree, be imputed to the instrumentality of that paper, when he was called to order by the Duke of Leeds, on the ground that his Lordship had no right to advert to any thing which did not form the actual matter of complaint; though it must be evident, when the ground of consideration was the quantum of punishment, that an offence which formed part of a destructive system for the subversion of establishments, required to be treated with greater severity than one which stood, insulated as it were, a mere solitary crime. Lord Minto concluded by moving, that John Lambert and James Perry were guilty of a high breach of the privileges of the House, and that they should be fined fifty pounds each, and be imprisoned, in Newgate, for three months.

The motion was opposed by the Duke of Bedford and the Earl of Derby, both of whom deemed the punishment proposed too severe; and both of whom avowed their personal acquaintance with Perry, spoke of him in terms of regard, and vouched for the soundness of his political principles. The Earl even peremptorily asserted, that he never employed either

his pen or his paper to undermine the civil or religious establishments of the country; that the Morning Chronicle was distinguished for its regard to the decencies of private life, and by its disdain of all scandal on individuals, and of those licentious personalities by which the peace of families was destroyed. The Duke insisted on the proprietor's inviolate attachment to the principles of the British Constitution, and on the uniformity of his language and conduct, during the whole of the French Revolution. The Marquis of Lansdowne, and the Duke of Norfolk, took the same side of the question. The Marquis considered the libellous paragraph as a mere *jeu d'Esprit*, marked by levity, with some wit; and the Duke extended his approbation to the general conduct of the paper.

The praises, constantly bestowed on these noble persons, in the columns of the paper in question, might have easily misled those who were unacquainted with the solemnity of judicial proceedings in the first court of judicature in the kingdom, to ascribe their sentiments, on the present occasion, to a laudable emotion of gratitude;—instead of considering them as the genuine dictates of impartial justice. On the other hand, Lord Sydney characterized the Morning Chronicle as a scandalous paper, which he would not admit into his House; and

the Lord Chancellor observed, that the paragraph in question was not entitled to the character of wit, or even of pleasantry; it was, in his estimation, a paragraph of dull malignity, and one of a series of attempts to undermine the authority of the House with the public. The House rejected an amendment proposed by the Duke of Bedford, for reducing the term of imprisonment to one month; by sixty-nine votes to eleven; after which the original motion was carried; and the prisoners were committed to Newgate.

Perhaps there was no question which was discussed during the session, that marked more strongly, than this, the spirit of party, which actuated the leading members of Opposition, in their Parliamentary conduct. The paper, for the soundness of the principles of which they thus solemnly pledged themselves, had, from the first dawn of the French Revolution, lavished the most fulsome adulation on its founders and supporters; had praised, without discrimination, and without measure, all the successive rulers of the regicide republic; and, so far from having made, as the Earl of Derby asserted, no attempt to undermine either the religious or the civil establishments of the country, it had invariably displayed an inveterate hostility to both, had constantly pleaded the cause of the

French, and sought to render the most sacred maxims of religion and morality the objects of derision and scorn.*

The *legislative* measure respecting the press, to which reference has been made, arose from a libellous paragraph, in an evening print, (*The Courier*,) accusing the British government of having treated the French Prisoners with the greatest cruelty. This charge gave rise to an investigation, by a Committee of the House of Commons, who, after they had examined witnesses, and gained every possible information on the subject, pronounced it to be a most false and infamous fabrication. It was then determined to bring the author of this foul libel on the country to justice; but the Attorney-General, to whom, of course, the prosecution was entrusted, could find no ostensible person upon whom he could charge the guilt. In short, every attempt to discover the proprietor of the paper proved fruitless. It remained, therefore, either to suffer the most daring attacks upon the Government and Constitution of the country to pass with impunity, or to adopt some measure for facilitating the ends of public justice, by having some person or persons who should be responsible for the

* See Appendix C.

contents of every publication. To require this, was to impose no restrictions on the press; was to introduce no change into the law of libels; was not to make that libellous which the existing law did not already declare to be so; nor, in short, to adopt any regulation which was not compatible with the utmost latitude of civil liberty, as it regards the press.

For this purpose the Attorney-General, early in April, introduced a bill into the House of Commons, the *title* of which was "A bill for preventing the mischiefs arising from newspapers being printed and published by persons unknown, and for regulating them in other respects;" and the object of which he truly professed to be, *to secure and to preserve the liberty of the press;*— for, certainly, every restraint imposed on *licentiousness* is a security afforded to *liberty*. In order to secure the purpose of the bill it was rendered necessary that the proprietors, (or, where there were several proprietors, *two* of them, having the largest portion of the property,) and printers of all papers, should register their names and places of abode at the Stamp Office, which register was to be a sufficient proof of their being proprietors and printers, in a Court of Law; and it was required that one paper should be regularly sent to the

Stamp Office, there to be preserved to prove, if necessary, the publication of any paper containing libellous matter. There were some other regulations of more minute objects, all tending to the same point. In supporting the propriety of this measure, the Attorney-General stated a fact too important to be omitted in a History of the Times. He produced to the House a parcel of unstamped newspapers which had been found in a neutral vessel, bound to France; and which papers contained information, which, if any one had written and sent in another form to the enemy, he would have committed the highest crime of which a man could be guilty. In one of them was a letter, which noticed the intended departure of the West India fleet, under the inadequate convoy of only two frigates; and expressing, at the same time, great anxiety about the safety of this fleet. In another article it was stated, that as the people of England were about to be raised in a mass, the French would not be such fools as to invade this country, but would go to Ireland. There could not be a doubt respecting the *intent* of these articles which contained both information and advice, highly useful and important to the enemy, thus rendering newspapers the means of committing high treason with impunity. To prevent these enormous

evils, it was proposed by the Attorney-General to prohibit the exportation of newspapers.

In the short discussion which followed this motion, Mr. Tierney stated himself to have been commissioned by the editor of *The Courier* to say, that he had not the most distant idea, that the matter of the libellous paragraph was false. This acknowledgment of Mr. Tierney's drew a call upon him from Lord Temple, to state the name of the editor to whom he had referred. The paper his Lordship described as a scandalous outrage on law, morality, religion, and justice. It was the echo of France, and propagated, with unyielding industry, the monstrous misrepresentations of the French Directory, and their detestable principles. His Lordship, therefore, very reasonably, thought that Mr. Tierney would fail in his duty, as a Member of that House, if he hesitated to give the information which had been requested, in order to bring such a "SCOUNDREL" as that to justice.*

The circumstances under which this call, by one Member of the House on another, was made, must be duly considered before its propriety can be ascertained. His Majesty's Attorney-General had just declared to the House,

* Woodfall's Parliamentary Reports, April 4, 1798.

that, having discovered in The *Courier* a most atrocious libel, charging the government with the infliction of cruelties on the French prisoners, whom the chance of war had thrown into their hands,—a charge eminently calculated to afford a specious pretext to the French Directory, for the truly diabolical treatment to which they had subjected English prisoners in France, and to render that treatment, if possible, still more barbarous,—he had felt it to be his duty to institute a prosecution against the paper. In this attempt, however, he had failed, from his inability to discover any person to whom a legal responsibility would attach.—The crime, therefore, must pass with impunity, and the ends of public justice be defeated. A Member of the House of Commons then rises in his seat, and declares his knowledge of, and acquaintance with, the offender who had thus escaped the search of the Attorney-General and the violated laws of his country. Under these circumstances, another Member, anxious, as every good subject must be, to prevent any interruption of the course of justice, and to remove any impediment to the execution of the laws, (for such interruptions and such impediments are public grievances, since the avowed object of all law is the punishment and the prevention of offences,

" which are either directly or indirectly injurious to civil society,") calls upon the first to name the culprit, in order that he may be *brought to justice.* How far any Member of Parliament has a right to screen a public offender it is not necessary to inquire; but it may be asserted, that a Member, in seeking to bring a culprit to justice, can be guilty of no breach of duty, without any stretch of presumption, or infringement of prerogative.—Lord Temple, then, must appear, in the present instance, to have acted strictly within the line of his public duty, and, consequently, to have been entitled both to respect and to support.—The question is here considered in the abstract, without reference to the general character of the paper, forming the subject of enquiry, which, however, far from being overcharged by Lord Temple, had exhibited, during the greater part of the interval between the commencement of the war and the period of this discussion, the symbol of sedition, and the type of treason.

Mr. Tierney, however, with a querulousness that marked most of his speeches at this period, told Lord Temple that he knew not whether he had a right to put the question; but certain it was, that *he* would not turn

*common informer** by answering it. He did not suppose any other Member would have asked a question so delicate, and which it would be so improper to answer. He had often heard the noble Lord talk of his stake in the country, but *that was a stake stolen from the public hedge.*† The editor of The Courier, Mr. Tierney alledged to be a man of respectability; and though Lord Temple took the liberty, in that House, of calling a man a *scoundrel*, who had not the means of answering him, he would not, perhaps, have ventured to say so before him. He considered the conduct of the noble Lord as reprehensible, and cautioned him not to ask questions flippantly, lest he should receive answers which he might not

* *A common informer* is a man who institutes a prosecution with a view to pecuniary emolument;--- Qui tam pro domino rege quam pro *seipso*, &c. Now, though Mr. Tierney, by affording the means of bringing the offender to justice, would have discharged his duty *as well to his Lord the King as to himself*, it would require uncommon ingenuity to discover how, by so doing, he could have subjected himself to the denomination of a *common informer*.

† *To steal a stake from a hedge*, whether public or private, is to commit an unlawful act, punishable by statute. But what this could have to do, either literally or metaphorically, with the stake which Lord Temple had in the country, that is, with his rank or fortune, it is not easy to imagine.

like. The Solicitor-General and Mr. Windham supported the propriety of Lord Temple's question; though they did not deny the right of Mr. Tierney to refuse an answer,—a right from which men often derived great benefit before a magistrate, or a bench of justices.

Mr. Windham truly remarked, that the term *informer* was one which many persons found an interest in reprobating; with respect, however, to himself, and to those who had the honour to be of his Majesty's Privy Council, they were bound by an oath to make discovery of every traitorous machination that came within their knowledge.

Mr. Tierney, in the excess of his zeal, had wandered from the question, and, adverting to an indictment preferred against a bookseller, for publishing a most seditious and inflammatory pamphlet, written by Mr. Gilbert Wakefield, and purporting to be an answer to the Bishop of Llandaff, he reprobated one of the Counts which stated, that Johnson, (the publisher) wishing to degrade and vilify the government, did express a doubt of the sincerity of Mr. Pitt in the late negotiation. When the Attorney-General had corrected his statement, Mr. Pitt himself defended the measure before the House, to which no man could object but Mr. Sheridan, who, after a long

absence, had come down to state broadly, that no prosecution at all ought to be instituted against the abuses of the press. It was no wonder, however, that *he* should object to it, as, upon his own principles, no check should be given to the circulation of the foulest private slander, the most undisguised sedition, the most pointed treason, and the most daring attempts to overthrow the established Constitution of the country. In answer to Mr. Tierney's remark, that it was a new thing to consider as a libel the assertion, that a person who had the honour to be high in his Majesty's Councils, and to have a considerable share in the direction of public affairs, was insincere in a negotiation for peace; he observed, the charge had been made after Parliament, upon solemn discussion, had pronounced, that the negotiation had been conducted with the most striking proofs, and accompanied with the most convincing pledges, of sincerity. It was a charge, therefore, upon that Parliament which had borne testimony to the sincerity of those to whom the negotiation was confided. The observation of Mr. Tierney, however, had not the recommendation of novelty; Mr. Pitt recollected to have seen it imputed to a learned gentleman, (Mr. Erskine,) and represented to have been made at a certain club, (the Whig Club.) It was, indeed, very

likely to come from a person who was the advocate and the patron of all their libels. He would venture to meet that learned gentleman upon the point, and, if he did come and state, in his place, the charge which he had asserted to be innocent, he should be ready to shew him, that he could as little justify it as a matter of fact, as he could defend it as a point of law. Never, he was sure, had Mr. Erskine, amidst all the libels which he had been employed to defend, been engaged in the justification of a more flagitious libel than that for which it was understood he was now retained. Compared with the other contents of the pamphlet in question, the charge alluded to was perfect innocence. It was the most daring attack upon the whole Constitution of the country; it vilified and degraded our national spirit; it exhorted the people not to defend themselves against the enemy; and was the most infamous collection of sedition and treason that ever was published.* It was not matter of surprize to him, therefore, to be libelled by those who praised the enemies,

* Of this pamphlet, here so justly characterized by Mr. Pitt, Johnson was afterwards tried as the publisher, and Wakefield as the author;—the former was sentenced to six months' imprisonment in the King's Bench. The latter to a longer confinement in Dorchester Castle. The party, however, made the author amends for his sufferings, by a subscription, which was said to amount to *four thousand pounds.*

and reviled the establishments, of his country. If Mr. Erskine, who had asserted that it was no libel, would come down to the House, and repeat his assertion there, he would tell him, that he had uttered a libel which he could not justify by argument.* He would not pledge his character, as a lawyer, upon that doctrine; nor attempt to shew that, in point of fact, there was any reason to doubt the sincerity of Ministers. Would any man say, that it was not to alienate the affections of the people from the Government, to tell them that the Executive power was inattentive to their interests; and that the Legislature sanctioned the conduct of those by whom the public happiness was betrayed? Would any man say, that charges such as these were not grossly libellous, and did not tend to bring into disrepute the whole Government and Constitution of the country?

Mr. Tierney, in reply, asked Mr. Windham whether he meant to say, that he was connected with a traitor? In answer to which, Mr. Windham simply observed, that the paper was treasonable, and although Mr. Tierney had acknowledged his acquaintance with the editor, he had refused to state his name. "If the editor be really guilty of high treason," said Mr. Tierney,

* Mr. Erskine was too prudent to accept this challenge. The House of Commons was certainly not the theatre of *his* triumphs.

" indict him, and call me as a witness." He seems to have forgotten that the very ground of the inquiry was the impracticability of finding any one against whom an indictment could be preferred; and it would have been a novel mode of commencing a criminal process, by finding the Bill of Indictment before the person of the culprit could be identified.

The Bill was brought in, and, after some farther opposition, passed both Houses, and received the Royal Sanction in the month of June, at the end of which the Parliament was prorogued.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

Retrospective View of Irish Affairs---Ireland governed by the great Proprietors of the soil---Restrictive Laws against Popery---Conduct of the Irish Aristocracy highly embarrassing to the English Ministers---Its advantages stated---Tranquillity of the Country for seventy years---Growth of the Protestant Religion---Indignant rejection by the Irish Parliament of Mr. Burke's Bill for improving, in certain respects, the situation of the Papists---Remarkable observation of Serjeant Dennis on that subject---Lord Townshend creates a rival power to counteract the influence of the Aristocracy---Policy of this conduct questioned---Extraordinary rapacity of one of the leaders of eth New Democratic Party---Earl Temple's first Administration---His wise and judicious conduct in the correction of Public abuses---Attack of the Opposition on the Attorney-General---His memorable reply---Earl Temple's second Administration---Creates numerous Enemies by the firmness and integrity of his conduct---Mr. Grattan's attack on the Established Church---Declaims against Tithes---His ignorance of the subject---Origin and proceedings of the Right Boys---Persecution of the Protestant Clergy---Increased by Mr. Grattan's invectives against them---The Clergy defended by Mr. Brown and Mr. Parsons---Their moderation proved by the low rate of the Composition for Tythes---Wretched sophistry of Mr.

Grattan exposed--- Reflections on the inadequate price of labour in Ireland---The Abolition of Tithes prejudicial to the Landholder---Bill for preventing tumultuous Assemblies brought in by Mr. Fitzgibbon---Violently opposed by Mr. Grattan--- His misrepresentation of the English Riot Act--- The Bishop of Cloyne defended against Mr. Secretary Orde and Mr. Curran---Bill carried---Impolitic measure of economy on the part of the Viceroy---The seals are given to Mr. Fitzgibbon, who is created Earl of Clare--- *The White Boys* and *Defenders*--- Their origin and outrageous conduct--- They are rather encouraged than opposed by the country gentlemen, who interfere to pervert the course of justice---Ferocious conduct of the Papists in Armagh--- Their inveterate hatred of the Protestants exemplified by their atrocious murder of an innocent Family at Forkhill--- Remarks on that occurrence--- The Papists seize the Arms of the Protestants wherever they can find them--- Resolutions of the Grand Juries on the subject---The *Defenders* look to France for assistance--- Petition of the *Catholic Committee* to the Viceroy, signed by the principal Nobility and Gentry of that persuasion--- The Papists condemn the Petition as too mild and moderate---They erase the Earl of Kenmare's name from the Committee--- Schism in the Committee---The *Catholic Society* formed--- Sir Hercules Langrishe censures the conduct of the Papists--- Limited nature of the claims now advanced by the *Catholic Committee*--- The House of Commons refuse to receive the Petition of the Papists as disrespectful and indecorous--- Another Petition presented, and rejected by two hundred and two votes against twenty-five---Meetings of the Papists in all quarters---The Parliament repeal several of the restrictive Laws against the Papists---The Papists rise in their claims --- Endeavour to form a National Convention--- The Convention assemble at Dublin and send Delegates to the

King---This Convention condemned as unconstitutional---The Convention dissolved after appointing the *Committee of the Catholics in Ireland,* four of whom are afterwards accused of Treasonable practices---Alarm of the Protestants--- Loyal Addresses of the Grand Juries--- Spirited Appeal of the Corporation of Dublin to the Protestants of Ireland--- Mr. Burke's predilection in favour of the Papists--- His Son is appointed secretary to the Catholic Committee--- Mr. Burke persuades Mr. Pitt to make farther concessions to the Irish Papists---Consequent inconsistency of the Irish Parliament--- Mr. Hobart introduces a Bill for granting the elective franchise, and other privileges, to the Papists--- The inaccuracy of his statements, and the fallacy of his arguments, exposed---Dangerous principles of the Papists proved from their own publications--- The Bill opposed by Mr. George Ponsonby and Mr. De la Touche--- Mr. George Knox moves to admit Papists to seats in Parliament---The Motion supported by Major Doyle and Colonel Hutchinson---Rejected by one hundred and sixty-three votes against sixty-nine---The Bill passes the Commons---Is supported, in the Lords, by the Bishop of Killala, who proves his ignorance of the origin and object of the Penal Laws against Papists---He is answered by Lord Clare, who imputes his misrepresentations to his want of knowledge---The Bill passes the Lords---Conduct of the Irish Parliament censured--- State of the Irish Papists at this period--- Continued prevalence of disaffection---The *United Irishmen*--- Bills passed for prohibiting the Importation of Arms and Ammunition, and for preventing unlawful Assemblies--- Revolutionary projects of the *United Irishmen*---They adopt the principles of the German Illuminati--- Union of the Papists and Presbyterians---The motives of both Parties---The Insurgents attack the King's Troops---Vigorous measures, of Lord Westmoreland, for suppressing the Insurrection---

Spirited conduct of Mr. John Giffard, the High Sheriff of Dublin--- Papers of the *United Irishmen* seized--- Apprehension, and condemnation, of Mr. Jackson---Lord Westmoreland recalled---Lord Fitzwilliam, Viceroy.

[1798.] The state of Ireland stood foremost among those objects of internal policy which claimed the attention of Mr. Pitt, at this momentous period of his administration. It was such, indeed, as threatened a dissolution of the tie by which, most fortunately for the two countries, this interesting portion of the now united empire was bound to Great Britain. A variety of causes concurred to produce the explosion which had just burst forth, and which produced scenes of desolation and slaughter, which it is one of the most painful duties of history to record.

From the reign of William the Third, to the period of Lord Townshend's administration, which began in 1767, the Irish nation had been governed by the great proprietors of the soil. Having been rescued by the revolution of 1688, and by the subsequent conquests of the British Monarch, from the dominion of popery, and from that state of oppression and of slavery, which it is so well calculated to cherish and to promote, the noblemen and gentlemen, in whom the landed property was chiefly vested, determined

to maintain these advantages, by making Ireland a protestant country, or, at least, to enact such strong restrictive laws as, in their judgment, were necessary to prevent them from being replunged into that situation whence they had, so recently, and with such difficulty, been extricated.

From an aristocracy so circumstanced, the infirmity of human nature could scarcely allow the expectation, that passion, prejudice, and self-interest, would not occasionally triumph over the higher and nobler considerations of public justice and of public good. In many instances, too, the conduct which that conscious strength derived from an unity of property and of action emboldened them to pursue, was the source of great trouble and embarrassment to the English Minister. The majority which they commanded in Parliament made it impossible to carry any measure without their consent; and such consent was not always to be obtained, without a grant of personal advantages, which, unlike mercy, blessed neither him that gave, nor him that received, them. If, however, these evils occasionally flowed from the overpowering influence of the aristocracy, it was, on the other hand, productive of many great and important public advantages. The connection of the aristocracy, with some of

the first families in Great Britain, rendered them extremely anxious to preserve and to strengthen the bond of union between the two countries, while the great stake which they held in Ireland prevented them from adopting any measure by which her particular interests could be materially affected. But the greatest proof of the general wisdom of their policy, notwithstanding their occasional aberrations from the strict line of duty, is to be found in that state of perfect tranquillity in which Ireland remained for the long term of seventy years; during which period the Protestant religion flourished,* and popery was reduced to so low an ebb, that thousands of proselytes were yearly received

* So resolute was the government of Ireland, during the period in question, to maintain and uphold the Protestant ascendancy, that when Mr. Burke (then Secretary to the Viceroy, the Earl of Halifax), introduced into Parliament a bill for allowing Papists to obtain better security for their property than they could obtain under the existing laws, it was received with indignation by the House, and Serjeant Dennis (who was afterwards promoted to a peerage) exclaimed; "What! shall we, at this day, when, by restrictions, on the one hand, and encouragement on the other, the whole kingdom is becoming Protestant, offer any favour or encouragement to popery, and undo all that the wisdom of our ancestors and our own exertions have effected? The man who consents so to act, should be branded as an enemy to his King and country."— These were the sentiments of government at the time.

into the bosom of the Established Church; and that no man who could give his son anything like an independent income, or who wished to place him in the army, or in any of the liberal professions, brought him up a Papist.

When these circumstances are considered, the policy of Lord Townshend's conduct, in raising up a rival influence against the old aristocracy may, probably, be questioned. This is not the place to detail the means which he employed for the accomplishment of that object. It is sufficient, for the purpose of this history, to observe, that he called into situations of trust and power, the lower class of gentry, and afforded countenance to those adventurers, who abound in every country, and who, having no other support than what they derived from their own talents, and the Viceroy's favour, were most likely to pay implicit obedience to his commands. Hence sprang a new race of nobles, and hence originated that democratic party which afterwards made so much noise in Parliament.*

* Lord Townshend soon found that the rapaciousness of some of the new characters, whom he brought forward for this purpose, exceeded all bounds. One of them, after having extorted from him a variety of grants, applied to him for a majority of horse, to give, as a portion, to one of his

From the period of Lord Townshend's administration, to the commencement of the American rebellion, the aristocratic and democratic parties found no subject for contention which called forth a display of their respective strength. During that rebellion, the creation of a large volunteer force, many of whom refused to lay down their arms, when called upon by government so to do, and were joined by a number of papists, gave rise to disturbances, which have been noticed in a preceding volume.* The democratic party endeavoured, but too successfully, to render them the tools of faction, and the means of affording great uneasiness to the government.

As soon as it was known to Ireland that the reins of government had been placed in the hands of Mr. Pitt, the greatest joy pervaded the minds of all who recollected the wise and vigorous administration of his illustrious father. The nation was disposed to consign its past

daughters; upon which the indignant representative of royalty expressed a hearty wish that this importunate patriot would change sides, that he might no longer be subjected to his incessant claims; and declared that his avarice was so insatiate, that were he to give him England and Ireland, as estates, he would ask for the Isle of Man for a kitchen garden.

* See Chapter VI. Vol. I.

misfortunes to oblivion, and to be cheered by the flattering prospect of better times. The hopes which it had been thus led to cherish were further strengthened by the wise conduct of Earl Temple, who was now appointed Viceroy. This nobleman, at the very commencement of his administration, began seriously to enforce a correction of official abuses in the various departments of the state, and to establish a rigid system of economy in the public expenditure. By this honourable conduct, by this faithful discharge of his duty, he raised a host of enemies. All the peculators, their friends, and all who hoped to become peculators themselves, declared war against him, and only waited for a favourable opportunity to display their resentment with effect;—for corruption had risen to such a height that those who practised it boldly threw off the mask of shame, and had even the audacity to *justify* the most scandalous frauds.

At the opening of the Irish Parliament, in 1784, the democratic party raised a violent outcry against the Judges and the Attorney-General, for having proceeded, by way of attachment, against the Sheriffs, who, in breach of their duty, had summoned popular meetings on the requisition of the delegates of faction.*

* See Vol. I. p. 250, 251.

Mr. Fitzgibbon, however, met and repelled the attack, with that intrepid spirit which distinguished the whole of his conduct, in all the high stations which he, successively, filled; and with that gigantic strength of argument which marked all his parliamentary orations. "I am "not a friend, Sir," said this firm champion of the laws, "to skirmishing, or to speaking to "questions not immediately before the House; "but I think it necessary to shew, that what "has been said about issuing *Letters Missive*, is "unfounded, and that what has been said about "Mr. Pitt may be unfounded too."

"The virtuous assembly of which I have "spoken," (the assembly held at Dublin for the appointment and instruction of delegates to a national congress) "appeal to the people, "and request them to elect delegates to a nati- "onal congress, to reform the Parliamentary "representation of the kingdom. To this "great work, they invite men of all descrip- "tions; Tinkers and Tailors, Hackney-Coach- "men and Chimney-Sweepers!—Come unto "us all, ye that labour, and are heavy laden "with the burden of the present Constitution— "come unto us, ye virtuous reformers, of "every denomination—your plans cannot be "too wild, your intentions cannot be too sedi- "tious;—come unto us, we will receive you

" with open arms.'—Farther, as it may not be
" uninteresting, I shall read their names to the
" Committee; — James Napper Tandy, John
" Tabot Ashenhurst, a Notary; John Peree,
" an Attorney; William Wenman Seward, an
" Attorney's Clerk; George Joseph Brown, an
" obscure Barrister; Ignatius Weldon, a Popish
" Merchant, &c.;—William Smith; William
" Arnold, a Weaver; William Buck, Sheriff's
" Clerk; John Ball, John Hodson, Charles
" Walker, Arthur Neville, a Land Surveyor.
" And from this Committee of thirteen select
" men, writs were issued to the Sheriffs of the
" different counties, commanding them to
" return representatives for their bailliwicks to
" meet in national congress, to be holden in
" Dublin on the 25th of October, 1784: which
" writs were returnable into the hanaper of James
" Napper Tandy, Esq.—witness our trusty and
" well-beloved William Wenman Seward, who,
" in the course of my practice, I know to be
" an Attorney's Clerk. But, grievous to relate,
" very few of the Sheriffs of the counties were
" actuated by the spirit of James Napper
" Tandy; consequently, very few counties
" returned members to *his* Parliament. The
" Sheriff, indeed, of the county of Dublin,
" took upon him to prostitute his power to the
" purposes of faction—a power with which the

" Crown had invested him for the benefit of " the subject. But I have taught him, as I " will every man who presumes to act illegally, " that the law is too strong for them all.

" In prosecuting the Sheriff of Dublin, I " adopted the mode by attachment, because it " is the mode pointed out by the law to prevent " the abuse of authority delegated by the " King to his officer, for the maintenance of " law. I did not appeal to juries, because, " before the decision of juries could be obtained, " much mischief might have been done; a vile " example in sedition might have misled other " Sheriffs; and, therefore, the King's Attorney- " General wished to shew the other Sheriffs of " the kingdom, what they were to expect if " they abused their trust. And, I say, that the " government which would suffer the King's " officers, the Sheriffs, to put themselves at the " head of a pitiful faction, and, under colour of " their authority, promote the seditious designs " of a congress, composed of James Napper " Tandy and his associates, might be made " answerable to this House for its pusillanimity. " The House would have a right to ask them— " 'Do you, who are the executive power of " the state, countenance this sedition? Is it " abetted by the Crown? Does the King " appeal from his Parliament to a congress?'—

" And I, for myself, declare, that, under a " government which could be so weak and " dastardly, as to wink at such proceedings, I " would not hold, for one hour, the office " which I have the honour to fill.

" When it was proposed to Mr. Pitt that " he should enter into a general resolution, " declaratory of the necessity of a Parliamen- " tary Reform, he declared he never would " enter into general resolutions, until an " amended mode was first agreed to."

The clamorous patriots were silenced by the manly eloquence of this steady friend to the Constitution, and, on that occasion, all their hopes were disappointed, all their plans frustrated, and all their attempts rendered abortive. The democratic party, however, triumphed in the fate of the commercial resolutions, which were afterwards submitted to Parliament, and which, though carried by a small majority in Parliament, were afterwards abandoned by the Ministry.*

In the autumn of 1787, Earl Temple, recently created Marquis of Buckingham, was again promoted to the vice regal dignity. And he again took with him to Ireland, the same manly resolution to extirpate corruption from the

* Vol. I, p. 270.

the Romish Chapels,* and in the market towns.

The consequence of this illegal combination, and of the scandalous outrages which flowed from it, was, that numbers of the Protestant Clergy, particularly in the county of Cork, forsook their parishes, and fled to the great towns for refuge. Emboldened by success, the insurgents proceeded from one act of enormity to another; they deprived the Protestants of their arms; they levied money for the purchase of ammunition; they forced open the gaols; they destroyed stacks of hay and corn; and they set fire to houses, especially to such as were occupied by the army. At last they carried their audacity so far as to threaten to starve the cities of Limerick and Cork, and the town of Ennis, the capital of Clare; and they ted measures for preventing the farmers from supplying those places with provisions.

It was during the prevalence of this insurrection, that Mr. Grattan chose to join in the popular clamour against tithes, and to direct his declamatory rage against the oppressed and persecuted Clergy of the Established Church; while his inflammatory speeche, being printed

* Idem Ibid. Plowden's Historical View of the State of Ireland, Vol. II. p. 165.

and industriously circulated among the insurgents, increased the acrimony of their malice, sharpened the bitterness of their revenge, and rooted more deeply in their bosoms those principles of hostility which they had been taught to encourage against the profession of the Protestant faith.

Mr. Grattan's mistatements, however, were not suffered to pass without correction, nor his misrepresentations without reproof. The Members of the University effectually vindicated the clergy from the foul aspersions which had been cast upon them; and one of them, Mr. Parsons, now Lord Ross, declared, he would never bear to see the Established Church brought, like a delinquent, to the Bar, and arraigned; nor to have false evidences brought to asperse, to defame, and to calumniate, the Ministers of the Gospel. The other member, Mr. Brown, put an end to the debate by stating the actual rate of Tithes, in those parts of the kingdom where the greatest violence was displayed.—He said, that the Tithe of Potatoes varied, according to the goodness of the crop, from four shillings to eight shillings* per acre; that

* Mr. Grattan, in his speech on this occasion, had stated the Tithe of Potatoes to be from eight to twelve shillings per acre.—But it must strike every English reader as extraordinary, that the very moderate modus, or price taken in lieu of Tithes,

of Wheat from four shillings to six shillings; Barley from three shillings to five; Oats from

should have formed a subject of such heavy complaint. The land, on which this modus was imposed, was admitted, on both sides, to let from six to seven pounds per acre;—so that the Tithe did not amount to more than from one-fifteenth to one-sixteenth of the rent. Whereas in England it is no uncommon thing to find nine shillings per acre, for Tithe, imposed on land, which does not let for more than forty shillings, which is nearly a fifth part of the rent; and, in some instances, where the Tithe is in the hands of a Lay Impropriator, as much as thirty shillings per acre has been exacted for the Tithe of wheat. When the Tithe was exchanged in Scotland, in the 17th century, for a different mode of paying the clergy, it was rated at a fifth part of the net rent.

It is curious to observe the wretched sophistry employed by Mr. Grattan in the speech in question, in drawing a distinction between the effect of a low Tithe of eight shillings an acre, and a high rent of seven pounds, on the industry and comfort of the Farmer. The latter he described as a *Compulsion on labour*, and the former as a *penalty*. Whatever novelty there may be in such a remark, common sense revolts from it; and there can be no doubt, that if land which lets for £7. an acre, subject to a Tithe of 8*s*. were Tithe-free, it would let for £7. 8*s*. an acre. The abolition of Tithe, therefore, would only go to enrich the landlord, without contributing, in the smallest degree, to the relief of the Tenant.

It has, indeed, been not only asserted, but satisfacto proved, by an intelligent writer of this period, that the abolition or reduction of Tithe would *increase*, instead of diminishing, *the burdens of the real Landholder and Farmer*. He adduces instances of certain lands in Ireland, which had been discharged from the payment of Tithes, by various exemptions, having

eighteen pence to three shillings; and Meadow Land from one shilling to three per acre.

been, heretofore, the estates of monasteries and abbies, which, being ecclesiastical corporations, could hold lands exempt from the payment of Tithes. When such lands were to be let, they were always let at an advanced rent (as is constantly the case in England) on account of their being *Tithe-free*, and were advertised to be let exempt from Tithes, in order to enhance their value. And the author advances a variety of strong arguments in support of his position. (See *An Address to the Nobility and Gentry of the Church of Ireland, as by Law established, explaining the real causes of the Commotions and Insurrections in the Southern parts of this Kingdom, respecting Tithes*, &c. By Theophilus. *Originally published in* 1787, *and republished in* 1808.) The same sensible writer confutes the assertion of Mr. Grattan and others, that Tithes ought to be abolished, because they are a tax upon industry, since the more a farmer tills and cultivates the earth, the greater quantity of Tithe is demandable from him. "This curious argument was first hatched by the sectaries in England, in the odious civil war which desolated the three kingdoms; but had so little weight, even with the fanatic rulers in that accursed period in our history, that Tithes continued to be paid throughout England, and were demanded and received by the ignorant rabble, who then usurped the pulpits, and ejected the orthodox clergy, even in the worst period of that illegal domination. But, let us examine how it can be maintained, that Tithes (even supposing them to be a tax) are more a tax on industry than all other taxes. The merchant who deals in the export or import trade, pays the more taxes, the more extensive his dealings are, and his taxes increase with his trade; how then are Tithes more a tax on the industry of the farmer than the duties payable by merchants on goods exported or imported

Such discussions were not calculated to tranquillize the country, or to check the pro-

are taxes on the industry of the merchant? The more extensive the dealings of a skilful merchant are, and the greater his industry, the more are his profits, and the more are his taxes: his industry renders him more able, and more willing, to pay the taxes; and he would smile at the absurdity of any person who would tell him, that he ought to be less industrious, because he would thereby diminish the taxes payable by him. In the same manner a farmer, the more industrious he is, and the more extensive his cultivation, pays the more Tithe, and is the more able to pay it: and it is a ridiculous argument, to prove a tax an impolitic one, to say it is a tax which is levied in an exact proportion with the abilities and means of the persons who are to pay it. It may, perhaps, be here objected, that this method of reasoning is fallacious, because, though the merchant pays the more taxes, the more extensive his dealings and his industry are, yet that he reimburses himself by fixing a proportionably higher price on his commodities, and thereby actually levies the tax paid by him on the consumer. But pray is not the case the same with the farmer? Does not the farmer sell the produce of his farm so much the dearer, as his rent, his Tithe, and his outgoings in the cultivation of his farm, are the greater and more expensive? If he does not so, he cannot long continue his business, he must be ruined. Does not the farmer, therefore, as well as the merchant, levy this tax of Tithes on the consumer."—Idem. P. 55, 56. This reasoning, in its *general* application, is perfectly sound; but an exception must be admitted, in cases where, in adjoining parishes, as is frequently the case in England, the rate of Tithes varies considerably;—as, for instance, in one parish the Tithe may amount to four shillings per acre; whereas, in the next parish, it may amount to nine. In this case, if the farmer, in the

gress of insurrection. Some legislative measure, for that purpose, however, had become indispensable. And, at the very commencement of the session, the House of Commons, on the motion of the Attorney-General, had resolved, that some further provisions, by statute, were indispensably necessary to prevent tumultuous rising and assemblies, and, for the more ade-

last parish, attempt to make good the difference by raising the price of his produce, it is evident he will be defeated in his purpose, by his neighbours, who will be enabled to undersell him. But it is not on this narrow and contracted view of the subject, that the great question of Tithes is to be settled. Indeed, the author of the address is fully aware of this, and he, accordingly, establishes the right, expediency, and justice, of Tithes, on a broader and a truer basis. When Mr. Grattan asserted that the system of Tithes was *against the first principle of human existence*;* he was, probably, not aware, that Tithes were in existence under *the Jewish theocracy*.

There was one most serious evil which prevailed in Ireland at this time, which is still suffered to prevail, and which every effort of government should be exerted to remove;---the low and very inadequate price of labour. It was stated by Mr. Fitzgibbon, at the opening of this session, and afterwards by Mr. Grattan, that, while an Irish peasant paid from six to seven pounds for an acre of ground for the cultivation of potatoes, he worked out his rent at the rate only of five-pence or six-pence a day for his labour. Taking the highest rate of land and of labour, the peasant would thus be obliged to work for his

* See an account of this speech in Plowden's Historical Review. Vol. [illegible], p. 165.

quate and effectual punishment of persons guilty of outrage, riot, and illegal combination, and of administering and taking unlawful oaths. Mr. Fitzgibbon afterwards brought in a bill, conformable to this resolution, which occasioned some warm debates, and was strongly opposed by the democratic party, on the usual ground, that the existing laws were fully adequate to the correction of the evil complained of, although the experience of every day proved their inefficacy. Mr. Grattan represented the bill as exceeding, in severity, the English riot act; and instanced, as a proof of his assertion, that "in England, the proclamation is obliged to be read; but, by this bill, nothing more was required of the magistrate than to command the rioters to disperse in the King's name. If they did not disperse in one hour, death was the consequence;, and this he considered as putting

landlord no less than two hundred and eighty days, or *more than three quarters of a year*, for the use of an acre of land for twelve months. This is a grievous oppression, which ought not to be tolerated in any country; and the man who would bring forward a bill for the regulation of wages in Ireland, so as to render them more proportionate to the price of land and of produce, would acquire much more solid claims to the character of a patriot, and to the gratitude of his countrymen, than could be conferred by any effort to abolish tithes, or to *emancipate* the Papists.

an hour-glass in the hand of time, to run a race against the lives of the people; and this was certainly a great objection.* Here was an objection founded on a distinction without a difference; the only difference between the censured provision of the Irish act, and that of the English riot act (Stat. 1. Geo. 1, c. 5.) being that, in the former, the justices are required to *command* the rioters to disperse, in such language, and in such a way, as to them shall seem meet; whereas, in the latter, the form of command (for the magistrate is there also required to *command* the rioters to disperse) is given. What greater *severity* there can be, in the one case than the other,—it surpasses the sagacity of history to discover. In both cases, the penalty of non-compliance with the command, for one hour, is the same; every person remaining after that period, provided the number amounts to twelve, being made guilty of a capital offence. And it must be precisely the same thing, as far as "the hour-glass," and "the lives of the people," are concerned, whether the magistrate signifies his command in words of his own selection, or in words provided for him by an Act of Parliament. But, as great stress appears to have been laid on the

* *Plowden's Historical Review*, Vol. II, p. 160. Note.

duty of reading *the proclamation* imposed on the English magistrate, it is probable that Mr. Grattan, either thought himself, or wished to make his audience think, that the perusal of proclamation was a work of time, and would afford an opportunity to the rioters to disperse immediately, if they were so disposed; for, in no other point of view, could the smallest importance be attached to the difference so strongly insisted on. The fact, however, is, that the proclamation is contained in five lines, and may be read or repeated in two minutes, or less.*—So that, in point of fact, there is no substantial difference between the provisions of the two acts, as far as respects the clause in question.

Mr. Orde, the Secretary to the Lord-Lieutenant, lamented, on this occasion, that any thing should have appeared in print, purporting that the insurrections had arisen from a Popish conspiracy, which he did not believe to be the case. He here alluded to an able pamphlet

* The proclamation is as follows:—"Our Sovereign Lord the King chargeth and commandeth all persons, being assembled, immediately to disperse themselves, and peaceably depart to their habitations, or to their lawful business, upon the pains contained in the Act made in the first year of King [illegible] for preventing tumults and riotous assemblies.—God save the King."

written by the learned, and truly pious, Doctor Woodward, Bishop of Cloyne, in which the origin and progress of the insurrection in Munster were traced, with a view to rouse the government to proper exertions of vigour, and to obtain the protection of the laws to the peaceable inhabitants, and loyal subjects, of Ireland. Mr. Curran, one of the leaders of the Democratic party, joined Mr. Orde in this lamentation, and treated as fabulous the imputed existence of a scheme formed by the Papists and Presbyterians for the subversion of the established religion and Constitution.* To these representations must be opposed not only the venerable Bishop of Cloyne, who had, at least, as good an opportunity as the Secretary of the Lord Lieutenant, to ascertain the truth of the facts which he stated, but also the remarks of another able writer, from whose tract some quotations have been already made. "The Romish Clergy," he says, "in many places, openly acknowledge, that they are the authors of insurrections; for many of them had the boldness, traitorously, to read to congregations, in their respective Masses, the most rebellious manifestoes of the insurgents, pretending that they were com-

* Plowden's Historical Review, Vol. II, p. 162.—*Note.*

pelled by threats so to do, though it is well known that the Popish laity are, in general, the slaves of their priests, and absolutely under their control; and their Mass-houses are the usual places where the insurgents meet, and bind themselves by oaths to execute their rebellious and barbarous designs, to give their confederacy the greater strength and duration when cemented, and, as it were, consolidated, by an oath, made at the feet of their altars." *

This measure of police being carried with a high hand, and the Lord Lieutenant continuing to observe the most rigid frugality, in the expenditure of the public money, nothing remained on which discontented patriotism could expatiate with energy or effect. To such extremes, indeed, were the Democratic party driven, and so scanty was their supply of grounds for declamation, that they even condescended to accept, as a theme on which to exercise their talents, an act of *extravagance*, on the part of the Secretary to the Viceroy, who had expended the sum of *fifteen pounds* on the enclosure of a scrap of ground in the Phœnix Park. To make amends, however, for this extraordinary deviation from his usual

* Address to the Nobility and Gentry, &c. by Philalethes, p. 71, 72.

system of economy, and to supply the deficit occasioned thereby in the Vice-Regal Treasury, the Lord Lieutenant ordered all the old pictures and useless furniture, at the Castle, to be sold by auction, for the benefit of the public;—nay, he even went so far, as to cause the arsenal and ordnance stores to be rummaged, and all the defective arms to be disposed of in the same way; to the great advantage of the numerous gangs of robbers and disturbers of the peace, who thus provided themselves, at a cheap rate, with the means of future depredations.

The conduct of the Democratic party, at the awful period of the King's illness, has been fully detailed in the account of the discussions and proceedings, in both countries, on that occasion. Immediately after his Majesty's recovery, Mr. Fitzgibbon, the Attorney-General, whose steady loyalty formed a striking contrast to the selfish policy of many of his colleagues, was created Earl of Clare, and made Chancellor of Ireland.

Meanwhile the internal tranquillity of Ireland was partially disturbed, by numerous gangs of depredators, in several of the provinces, known by the appellations of *White Boys* and *Defenders*, the former being *Presbyterians* and the latter *Papists*. The origin of these riotous gangs of miscreants has been ascribed to an

accidental quarrel between two Presbyterians, in the Summer of 1784, when a fight ensued, in which the advice of two by-standers, of the Romish persuasion, was of great service to the party who beat the other. The vanquished vowed revenge, and several battles ensued, in the course of that, and the succeeding, year, but without any distinction of Papist and Presbyterian, neighbours of both persuasions fighting under the same banner. At length, however, the animosity which has ever prevailed between the two descriptions of religionists produced a separation, and gave to their irregular proceedings the cast and character of a religious feud. The Romanists having betrayed a great anxiety to collect all the arms which they could possibly procure, the Presbyterians resolved to disarm them; and, at this period, the former assumed the appellation of *Defenders*, and the latter that of *Peep o'Day Boys*, from the circumstance of their visits to the houses of the Papists, at day-break, for the purpose of searching for arms. During these visits, the most lawless outrages were committed on the Papists; and the passions of both parties became, in a short time, so much inflamed, that resentment silenced the voice of reason; and revenge stifled the admonitions of conscience.

Had the gentlemen of the country used

but common efforts for quelling the prevalent disposition to riot and tumult; there is no doubt, that tranquillity and order might have been easily restored. But, far from exerting their influence for so salutary a purpose, they rather encouraged than soothed the violence of the contending parties, and, for the low object of electioneering interest, adopted either one side or the other, thus sacrificing the public peace to private considerations. They even interfered to pervert the course of justice, and, in 1785, when some Presbyterians were convicted of a barbarous assault on a Romanist, a neighbouring gentleman interposed between the culprits and the law, and rescued them from the punishment which they were sentenced to undergo. On the other hand, two years after, a Papist, having been sentenced to die at Armagh, for the murder of a Presbyterian, another individual exerted his interest, and procured his pardon.

Hitherto, the members of the Established Church had taken no part in this dispute; but the public peace was so far interrupted by it, in the year 1788, that companies of volunteers were formed for the avowed purpose of suppressing all tumultuous meetings, and of enforcing obedience to the civil power. These volunteers were, in various instances, attacked by the

defenders, who soon became a regular armed association, bound to each other, and to the common cause, by the solemn obligation of an oath, and possessed of abundance of arms. It is remarkable, that the form of their oath contained a qualified promise of obedience to the King, "*while we live under the same government*;"* and, from the observation of a noted defender, who was executed for treason, in 1795—"*If the King's head were off to-morrow, you would not be under the same government*," it has been, reasonably, inferred, that they had combined for treasonable purposes.† And it has also been concluded, from what passed at the trial of other defenders, that their principal object was the extirpation of Protestants.‡

Whatever may be the justice and validity of this conclusion, a fact has been adduced in support of it, which establishes, beyond a doubt, the inveterate malignity, and ferocious spirit, of the lower class of Romanists, in the county of Armagh. A gentleman of Forkhill, in that county, died at the beginning of 1787,

* See the form of this oath in the Appendix (No. 11) to Sir Richard Musgrave's Memoirs.

† Sir Richard Musgrave's Memoirs, 4to. p. 58.

‡ Idem Ibid.

and left an estate of about four thousand a year, which he directed to be appropriated to the charitable purposes of peopling his demesne, which covered a tract of three thousand acres of land, with Protestants; and of endowing on it four schools, at which children of every religious persuasion should receive a gratuitous education. Two years after his death, his trustees obtained an Act of Parliament for carrying the provisions of his will into effect; and they appointed the Rector of Forkhill, Mr. Hudson, who was himself a trustee, the acting Agent in the business. The neighbouring Papists, however, avowed their resolution to prevent the execution of every part of this benevolent plan. They twice attempted to murder Mr. Hudson, by firing at him. On one occasion, a villain went from a Popish chapel, while the congregation was assembled, to the side of the road by which Mr. Hudson was passing, and deliberately levelled a musket at him from behind a bush, and killed his horse. The new Colonists were hunted like wild beasts; their houses were demolished; and their property was destroyed. The miscreants openly triumphed in their enormities; and, while they were transgressing both divine and human laws, in a manner which called for exemplary punishment, they seemed to think they were performing meritorious

deeds, deserving of commendation and reward. They burnt the manor-mill, and would have murdered the miller, but he fortunately effected his escape, naked; and, by fording the river in the night, preserved his life.

Early in 1791, these ferocious fanatics resolved to destroy Alexander Barclay, one of the Schoolmasters at Forkhill. An account of the horrid transaction was transmitted to the Bishop of Dromore, by three of the trustees, with the following letter:

"*Forkhill Lodge, 1st February,* 1791.

"My Lord,

"We, whose names are hereunto subscribed, having assembled at Forkhill, pursuant to Act of Parliament, to superintend the execution of the charities of the late Mr. Jackson, are much concerned to acquaint your Lordship, that a most horrid outrage was committed on Friday last, on the person of one Barclay, one of the schoolmasters appointed by us in this parish, (the particulars of which we enclose to your Lordship) in consequence of which we think it absolutely necessary to suspend all operations of the charity, until the opinion of a general board can be had, which we request your Lordship will summon with all convenient speed, and take such farther steps as the circumstances may require. We beg leave to remind your

Lordship, that, at the last general board, it was unanimously resolved, that the establishment of a barrack, for a company of foot, would be of general utility, and that your Lordship agreed to recommend it to the Lord Lieutenant. The late event shews the expediency of such an establishment; and we greatly fear, if some means are not immediately used to restore the peace of the county, the objects of the charity can never be fulfilled.

" PERCY JOCELYN,
" RICHARD ALLOTT,
" E. HUDSON."

" On Friday evening, at seven o'clock, a number of villains assembled at the house of Barclay, one of the schoolmasters in the parish of Forkhill, near Dundalk, appointed by the trustees of the late Richard Jackson's charities, to instruct, indiscriminately, the children of the poor of the said parish. They rapped at the door; he enquired who was there, and one man, of the name of Terence Byrne, his near neighbour (whose voice he well knew, and whom he had before, at different times, admitted upon knowing it) told him he was there; he opened the door, and a number of men rushed in, threw him on his face, and stabbed him repeatedly.—

They then put a cord round his neck, which they tightened so as to force out his tongue; part of which, as far as they could reach, they cut off.— They then cut off the four fingers and thumb of his right hand, and left him on the floor, and proceeded to use his wife in the same manner. To add to their barbarity, they cut out her tongue, and cut off her four fingers and thumb, with a blunt weapon, which operation took up above ten minutes, one or two of them holding up her arm, while they committed this inhuman action.—They then battered and beat her in a dreadful manner. Her brother, a boy of thirteen years of age, had come from Armagh that morning to see her. They cut out his tongue, and cut off the calf of his leg, and left them all three in that situation.

" No reason can be assigned for this most inhuman transaction. The man was a Protestant, a peaceable decent man; he taught above thirty of their children *gratis*, being allowed a salary by the trustees for forty more. He asked them, whether he had ever offended them? They said not; but that was the beginning of what he, and those like him,* should suffer.

* " Meaning Protestants."

" Shocking as this account is to human nature, *it is publicly exulted at in the Parish; and no person seems to think, that any punishment will follow the commission of this most atrocious wickedness. So far were they from wishing to conceal it, that they proceeded on the road with torches, publicly, and in defiance of every body.*

" There is every reason to dread the most alarming consequences from the effects of this transaction. The Protestants are every way in the greatest terror, and, unless government affords them assistance, must leave the country; as this recent instance of inhumanity, and the threatenings thrown out against them, leave no doubt upon their minds of what the intentions must be against them.

" The man and the boy can speak a little;—the woman* cannot; and, fortunately, they are all likely to die; as, if they live, they are incapable of earning their subsistence. Terence Byrne is since fled."†

One of the villains concerned in the horrid transaction was admitted as an evidence against one of his associates, Murphy, in whose house

* " She was a handsome young woman; they cut off one of her breasts, and she soon after died."

† Sir Richard Musgrave's Memoirs, 4to. p. 61, 62.

Barclay's watch was found.—And, his person being fully identified, he was doomed to suffer the sentence of the law. In his way to Forkhill, which, having been the scene of his crime, was, with great propriety, destined to be the scene of his punishment, he is said to have exhibited the strongest symptoms of fear, contrition, and despondency.—But when he approached the place of his execution, he was met by a Romish priest, who whispered, a short time, in his ear; his countenance brightened up, he advanced with firmness to the fatal spot, and met his fate with cheerfulness and resignation.*

This fact, which is established beyond the possibility of doubt, clearly demonstrates the ferocious spirit of the lower classes of Romanists, in that part of the country in which it occurred; and exhibits a strong proof of the justice of the charge which has been preferred against them, that the extirpation of the Protestant religion, and of its followers, was the principal object of their tumultuous assemblies. In this instance, their cruelty was greatly aggravated by their base ingratitude; for the man whom they murdered had never afforded them any ground of offence; on the contrary,

* Sir Richard Musgrave's Memoirs, p. 62.

he had been the instrument, in the hands of others, of conferring benefits on them, by the gratuitous instruction of their children.—But these wretched fanatics would not, it seems, be satisfied with favours conferred on themselves, if participated with Protestants. There was no *political* pretext to stimulate them to the commission of this deed.— On this occasion, neither *Tithes*, nor *Parliamentary Reform*, nor any other of the false and frivolous pretences, which the factious advocates of the Papists have urged in extenuation of their crimes, were, or could be, brought forward. The atrocious murder of an innocent family was the mere effect of Popish fanaticism operating upon ignorance. But these men had priests, who had a complete ascendancy over their minds, and whose duty it was to instil into them sentiments of Christian charity; to correct their evil propensities; to temper the savage virulence of their rude and boisterous passions; to humanize their souls, and to make them social beings. They do not, however, appear to have exerted their boundless influence for any such beneficial purposes; the determination to frustrate the benevolent designs of the pious Christian who had devoted his fortune to the good and welfare of his fellow creatures, was publicly known; and it is impossible, therefore,

to suppose, that the priests could be ignorant of it. Yet was no effort made to prevent it; and a deed was suffered to be openly perpetrated, which, for dark malignity of design, and for deliberate cruelty of execution, is to be equalled only by the sanguinary exploits of revolutionary France.

The continued collection of arms, by the Romanists, at length attracted the notice, of the legal authorities of the country. The Grand Jury, and High Sheriff, of the county of Armagh, at the Assizes in the Spring of 1791, came to the following resolution:—"That a rage among the Roman Catholics for illegally arming themselves has of late taken place, and is truly alarming. In order, then, to put a stop to such proceedings, and to restore tranquillity, we do pledge ourselves to each other, as Magistrates and individuals; and do hereby offer a reward of five guineas for the conviction of each of the first twenty persons, illegally armed and assembled as aforesaid."*

The revolution in France had, at this period, begun to display some of the natural effects of the principles on which it was founded. And, as the Catholic powers of the Continent had always been considered, by the disaffected part

* Musgrave's Memoirs, ubi suprà.

of the Irish nation, as their natural allies, they now looked to the French for assistance and support. And it is certain that the Defenders had resolved to effect a revolution in Ireland, on French principles, which should produce the separation of that country from the Crown of Great Britain, and establish the Catholic ascendancy on the ruins of the Protestant Church.

As the press had been found greatly instrumental in subverting the ancient institutions of the Gallic Monarchy, recourse was eagerly had to it for producing similar effects in Ireland. The most inflammatory publications were, accordingly, circulated through the greater part of the kingdom; and every symptom of an approaching revolution was visible, at an early part of the year 1791. Meantime the Catholic Committee, which sate regularly at Dublin, had resolved to petition the Legislature for a repeal of the restrictive statutes which had been passed for the security of the established Church. An address was drawn up, in a spirit of mildness and moderation, highly becoming the nature of such an application. It was signed by the Lords Fingal, Gormanstown, and Kenmare, by the Popish Primate, Dr. Troy, and by most of the gentlemen of respectability and property, of the Romish persuasion,

This Address was presented to the Lord Lieutenant, at the close of the year 1791.—But so little did the mild spirit which it breathed accord with the present feelings of the Papists, that their general Committee assembled, in Dublin, on the sixth of January, and published resolutions condemning the Address, and representing it as having been surreptitiously obtained; and as not expressing the real sense of the Catholic body. And they resolved to request the Viceroy to state to his Majesty their reasons for withdrawing their names from that Address. They declared that Lord Kenmare had entirely forfeited their confidence, by his late conduct, in procuring, by his own exertions, and by those of his emissaries, certain servile and insidious addresses, calculated to divide the Catholics of Ireland, and eventually to defeat their just applications for relief from the grievous oppressions under which they laboured. They also struck his name out of the list of their sub-committee.*

* Lord Kenmare had incurred the resentment of the turbulent and factious spirits which took the lead at this meeting, by his conduct, in presenting a Loyal Address in the name of the Roman Catholics of the county of Kerry, expressive of their concern at the appearance of certain inflammatory writings, and at the attempt to form associations, calculated to sow the seeds of discontent among the lower classes of Romanists.—*Musgrave's Memoirs, p. 78.*

At the same time parochial meetings were held in different parts of the kingdom, at which addresses of thanks were voted to the General Committee, and strong censures were passed on the Lords Fingal and Kenmare, and their expulsion from the Catholic Committee recommended. A schism in this body immediately ensued; the most turbulent members forming a new association, under the name of the Catholic Society. This society avowed their object to be a total repeal of all the restrictive laws against Papists; and they invited their fellow-sufferers, throughout the kingdom, to unite with them for its accomplishment; insisting that it was the interest of every man in Ireland to promote the abolition of the whole code. Till the commencement of 1792, Lords Fingal, and Kenmare, and Sir Patrick Bellew were at the head of the Committee, but, about that time, they became so disgusted and alarmed at the intemperance of their proceedings, that they left them, with about sixty of the most respectable of the Roman Catholic gentry. Lord Fingal had been voted out of the chair of the Committee, in rather a tumultuous manner, and Thomas Braughall was voted into it; and it has been said, that his Lordship became so sensible of the evil designs of these

turbulent patriots, that he, soon after this event, declared, that he should be very sorry to see the members of his Church put on an equal footing with those of the established religion.* Doctor M'Kenna, too, a Catholic writer, thus admonished the Committee for the impropriety of their conduct,—" If ever there should arise among us a ridiculous cabal of men, ambitious of rule, without abilities to regulate, who, actuated by vanity and jealousy, will endeavour to estrange from our cause the men of rank, and disgust its natural leaders, and discountenance men of letters, its natural auxiliaries; such persons may mean well, but their good intentions will only retard, not avert, what they well deserve, the execration of the body, whose opinions they caricature, and whose interest they injure. I am obliged reluctantly to express, (what the entire nation must perceive) that the few gentlemen of the metropolis, the sub-committee of Catholics, who

* Idem Ibid. I once heard a very intelligent English Catholic Priest declare, that, if there must be an established religion in the country, he would rather it should be the Protestant religion than any other, from a conviction that its spirit was more tolerant than that of any other religion. Indeed, the history of almost every country in Europe will convince any impartial man of the reality of this fact.

have hitherto assumed the direction of business,* stand in need of coadjutors. I question their prudence, not their zeal, not their intentions; but their reflection, foresight, and political sagacity. It is time the cause of a great people should assume the appearance of system. For the last ten months it has fluctuated before the public, in the hands of unskilful managers, without even the dignity of steadiness, advancing and retreating, asserting and retracting, with the giddiness of school-boys, and the random of a game of nine pins."

It was, at this time, that the proceedings of the Romanists so far disgusted even their warmest and best advocates, that Sir Hercules Langrishe, who had uniformly displayed the most friendly disposition towards them, thus expressed himself in Parliament, (in January, 1792) "Notwithstanding my prepossessions in favour of the Roman Catholics, I was checked for some time, in my ardour to serve them, by reading, of late, a multitude of publications and paragraphs in the newspapers, and other public prints, circulated, *gratis*, with the utmost

* The Committee were, at this time, under the special guidance of Edward Byrne, John Keogh, Randall M'Donnell, Thomas Braughall, John Sweetman, and Richard M'Cormick. The two last, and Theobald Wolfe Tone, (all of whom proved to be notorious traitors) were Secretaries to the Committee.

industry, purporting to convey the sentiments of the Catholics. What was their import? They were exhortations to the people never to be satisfied with any concession, till the State itself was conceded;—they were precautions against public tranquillity; they were invitations to disorder, and covenants of discontent; they were ostentations of strength, rather than solicitations for favours; rather appeals to the powers of the people, than applications to the authority of the State; they involved the relief of the Catholic with the revolution of the government; and were dissertations for democracy, rather than arguments for toleration."

But, intemperate as the Committee were, they did not yet venture directly to prefer those extravagant pretensions which, at a subsequent period, they advanced. They now limitted their claims to—admission to the profession and practice of the law;—capacity to serve as county magistrates;—a right to be summoned, and to serve on grand and petty juries;—and a right of voting, in counties only, for Protestant members of Parliament, but with a provision that a Roman Catholic freeholder should not vote, unless he either rented or cultivated a farm of twenty pounds a year, in addition to his freehold of forty shillings; or that he should be possessed of a freehold of twenty pounds a

year. These they published as the extent of their claims, in order to remove all false impressions on the subject, and to counteract the efforts of their enemies, who, in order to injure their cause, had asserted, that their expectations were greater. A petition, conformable to the pretensions thus avowed, was presented to the Irish House of Commons, in the month of February, 1792; but it was conceived in terms so disrespectful and indecorous, that the member who presented it (Mr. O'Hara) requested leave to withdraw it. Another petition was afterwards framed by the Committee, and presented to the House, but it was rejected by the decisive majority of 202 to 25.

On this occasion the Corporation of Dublin, the members of which had ever been distinguished for their steady attachment to the Established Church, and for unshaken loyalty to their Sovereign, voted their thanks to the majority of their representatives, for rejecting the Catholic petition for admission to the elective franchise. Nine days after, the Catholic Society held a meeting, at which they condemned the resolutions of the Corporation, and returned thanks to the five and twenty members who had supported their claims. The example of these two bodies was followed in many parts of the kingdom, by the grand juries, and by the

principal inhabitants of different counties and of towns; the Protestants voting thanks to the majority in Parliament, and declaring their determination to maintain the Constitution as it then stood; and the Catholics thanking the Minority, and expressing their resolution to persist in the assertion of their claims. Parochial meetings, too, were holden in several places, where the lowest orders of Catholics met, discussed their rights, censured the conduct of the grand juries, and applauded that of their delegates in the Catholic Committee; by which means great discontent, and general dissatisfaction, were spread among the people, and the passions of the multitude became irritated and inflamed.

But though the Parliament had rejected, as dangerous to a Protestant State, the claims which the Romanists had preferred to the elective franchise, by obtaining which they would have acquired a considerable degree of political influence, it wisely resolved to remove those odious incapacities, which nothing but an imperious necessity could, at any time, have justified, and which deprived them of the ability to settle in life, in a manner most agreeable to their inclinations. It was accordingly enacted, that, after the twenty-fourth of June, 1792, they might practice as attornies

and barristers; that Protestants and Papists might intermarry; and that Popish schoolmasters need not obtain licenses from the ordinary to keep school;—all restrictions respecting their education in foreign countries were likewise removed at the same time. These concessions, however, were received with a very ill-grace, by the great mass of Papists; and their Committee, being loosed from the restraints which the presence of the principal nobility and gentry of their persuasion imposed, resolved to be satisfied with nothing less than an equal participation of political power with the Protestants, without submitting to those conditions on which alone a Protestant is enabled to enjoy it. The means by which they should accomplish their end was perfectly indifferent to them. They endeavoured to intimidate the government, by putting the great mass of the people in motion; and Edward Byrne was ordered to issue writs to every county, and to many of the towns and districts, desiring certain persons to hold elections, and to choose representatives, to be returned forthwith to Dublin, for the purpose of forming a Convention. These writs directed that the elections should be carried on in the same manner, and on the same plan, which had been adopted in France, for the elec-

tion of the National Assembly.* So well were the Irish Romanists prepared previous to this election, that these writs were executed throughout the nation; a Romish Convention met, in consequence, on the third of December, 1792, at Tailor's-Hall, in Back-Lane, Dublin, whence they received the denomination of the *Back-Lane Parliament.* This Convention drew up one of the most false and acrimonious libels against the Protestant government of the country, that could possibly be devised, styled it a petition to his Majesty, and caused it to be presented as such by five of their delegates;—Sir Thomas French, Christopher Bellew, James E. Devereux, Edward Byrne, and John Keogh, Esquires. Lord Westmoreland, who was then Viceroy, did not think it fit to disperse this Assembly, which had been convened, as it were, by an assumption of Sovereign power, which constituted a kind of *imperium in imperio,* and which, notwithstanding the opinions in favour of its legality by two barristers, (Mr. Simon Butler, and Mr. Beresford Burston†) must be condemned as unconstitutional by every man who has paid any attention to the true principles

* Dr. Duigenan's Answer to Mr. Grattan's Address, p. 16.

† Plowden's Historical Review, p. 383.

of the Constitution. It, accordingly, continued sitting, with closed doors, in the very seat of government, for a considerable length of time, "to the great reproach of those who were then entrusted with the regulation of the police of the country;"* and when, at length, the members of it thought fit to close their sitting, they appointed a permanent Committee, whom they styled *The Committee of the Catholics of Ireland*, consisting of nine persons, who had been most active amongst them; three of whom, M'Nevin, Braughall, and Sweetman, were afterwards apprehended on charges of high treason, while their Secretary, M'Cormick, who was accused of the same crime, escaped punishment by flight.

While the Romanists were thus labouring to accomplish their grand object, the Protestants of Ireland were by no means passive spectators of the threatening storm. The Grand Juries, throughout the country, took the alarm, and drew up very strong addresses, at the Summer assizes, which were presented to the Viceroy, expressive of their resolution to defend the established religion of their country against every attempt at innovation, and deprecating the grant of the elective franchise

* Duigenan's Answer to Grattan, p. 1.

to the Papists, as highly dangerous to the constitution.* Foremost amongst the loyal Protestants of Ireland, stood the Corporation of Dublin, which assembled on the 11th of September, 1792, for the purpose of taking into consideration Edward Byrne's letter for assembling the *Back-Lane Parliament*, and the plan proposed for obtaining farther indulgence for the Papists, from the Legislature. At this meeting, it was unanimously resolved to address the following letter to the Protestants of Ireland:

"COUNTRYMEN AND FRIENDS!

"The firm and manly support which we received from you when you stood forward in defence of the Protestant Ascendancy, deserves our warmest thanks; we hoped that the sense of the Protestants of Ireland, declared upon that occasion, would have convinced our Roman Catholic fellow-subjects, that the pursuit of political power was, for them, a vain pursuit; for, though the liberal and enlightened mind of the Protestant receives pleasure in seeing the

* Some of these addresses may be seen in Mr. Plowden's work, Vol. II. p. p. 74, 75. They certainly spoke the sentiments of the members of the Established Church, although Mr. Plowden, with an equal contempt of decency and of truth, insinuates that the *juries* were *packed*.

Catholic exercise his religion with freedom—enjoy his property in security—and possess the highest degree of personal liberty, yet experience has taught us, that without the ruin of the Protestant Establishment the Catholic cannot be allowed the smallest influence in the State.

" For more than ten years the press has teemed with various writings, intended to prove the Roman Catholics have an equal claim with Protestants to a participation in the exercise of political power in this kingdom; that such a participation would not be injurious to Protestants; that prejudice, only, prevents Protestants from conceding this claim; and, to complete the work, a letter has lately appeared, signed '*Edward Byrne*,' in which the Roman Catholics are instructed to proceed upon the plan of the French democracy, to elect a representation of their own, to which said Byrne insinuates that ' the Protestants *must* bend, as he has assurance from the highest authority.'

" In answer to these charges, and these claims, we shall, in a few lines, briefly state the case of the Protestants and Roman Catholics of Ireland; in doing which we shall not endeavour to add to our language any other ornament than the beautiful simplicity of truth.

"One hundred years are just elapsed since the question was tried upon an appeal to Heaven,—whether this country should become a Popish kingdom, governed by an arbitrary and unconstitutional Popish tyrant, and dependant upon France, or enjoy the blessings of a free Protestant Government — a Protestant Monarchy, limitted by the Constitution,—and an intimate connection with the free Empire of Britain. The Great Ruler of all things decided in favour of our ancestors; he gave them victory, and Ireland became a Protestant Nation, enjoying a British Constitution.

"But the conflict had been neither short nor trivial; and so many and so great were the efforts made by the Roman Catholics in support of their Popish King, and French connections, that our ancestors were obliged, in their own defence, to deprive them of all political power, which they did by severe, but necessary, restrictive laws.

"Time draws the veil of oblivion over the virtues as well as the faults of men: In the lapse of more than fourscore years, the causes which induced the necessity of these laws were almost forgotten; while the generous Protestant saw, with pain, his Roman Catholic fellow-subject labouring under restrictions which, from his peaceable demeanour then, appeared

no longer necessary; and he could scarcely refrain from charging his ancestors with too much severity. Session after Session the restrictive laws were rapidly repealed, and the last Session of Parliament left the Roman Catholics in no wise different from their Protestant fellow-subjects—*save only in the exercise of political power.*

" But be it remembered, that from the moment the Protestant began to make concessions, the Roman Catholic began to extend his claims; at first a very little would have satisfied him—that little and much more was granted; more still was claimed; and when every thing, consistent with Protestant safety, was conceded, instead of grateful acknowledgments and declarations of satisfaction, our ears have been dinned with exclamations of discontent, the ravings of political clubs, and the declamations of state reformers.

" But, we hope that the great body of the Roman Catholics are yet free from the influence of that dangerous spirit which has pervaded the clubs in this city: We hope they will reject Mr. BYRNE's counsel, and be grateful for the indulgences they have received from Protestants. To delude them from their tranquillity, they are told by Byrne, that he has

'the first authority for asserting this appli-
'cation will have infinite weight with our
'Gracious Sovereign, and with Parliament,
'if our friends are qualified to declare, that
'it is the universal wish of every Catholic in
'the Nation.'— But we trust it is unfounded: were it otherwise, we tell them that the Protestants of Ireland would not be compelled, by any authority whatever, to abandon that Political situation which their forefathers won with their swords, and which is, therefore, their birthright; or to surrender their religion at the foot-stool of Popery.

"Every Irish Protestant has an interest in the government of this kingdom; he is born a member of the state, and with a capacity of filling its offices;— this capacity he derives from that Constitution, which his ancestors acquired when they overthrew the Popish tyrant—it is guaranteed by that Constitution—it is secured by the Law— he is in possession of it, and we know of no power under Heaven, authorised to alienate this, our most valuable inheritance.

"Having thus, Countrymen and Friends, spoken to you our sentiments in the undisguised language of truth, we shall intreat you to join with us in using every honest means of per-

suading the Roman Catholics to rest content with

"The most perfect toleration of their religion,

"The fullest security of their property—and

"The most complete personal liberty——

but by no means now, or hereafter, to attempt any interference in the government of the kingdom, as such interference would be incompatible with the Protestant Ascendancy, which we have resolved *with our lives and fortunes to maintain.*

"And, that no doubt may remain of what we understand by the words 'Protestant Ascendancy,' we have further

"Resolved, That we consider the Protestant Ascendancy to consist in

"A PROTESTANT KING OF IRELAND,

"A PROTESTANT PARLIAMENT,

"A PROTESTANT HIERARCHY,

"PROTESTANT ELECTORS AND GOVERNMENT,

"THE BENCHES OF JUSTICE,

"THE ARMY AND THE REVENUE,

"THROUGH ALL THEIR BRANCHES AND DETAILS,

"PROTESTANT;

"AND THIS SYSTEM SUPPORTED BY A CONNECTION WITH THE PROTESTANT REALM OF BRITAIN."

This spirited Address was sent to every Corporation in the kingdom, to every Magistrate, and to every Member of Parliament.—

The Government expressed their satisfaction at this manifestation of loyalty, and this promise of support, and avowed their determination never to admit the Romanists to any participation of political power in the State.*— Such was the unanimity which prevailed among the Protestants, and such the firmness avowed by the government, who cordially concurred in their sentiments, that the point was considered as settled; and as subject to no future difference or dispute. The Papists now enjoyed, in Ireland, a full and perfect toleration, as far as respected religious worship, and much greater indulgence than ever Protestants had enjoyed in any country in which the religion of Rome was the established religion of the State.— But a circumstance occurred, at this critical period, which produced a total change, if not in the *sentiments*, at least in the *conduct*, of the Irish government.

Mr. Burke, by his masterly writings on the French Revolution, and still more by the manly and decided part which he had taken in Parliament against the adoption of those destructive principles on which that revolution was founded, now stood deservedly high in the esteem and confidence of Mr. Pitt.

* Musgrave's Memoirs, 4to. p. 85.

Without entering into an unnecessary investigation of the cause which produced, in Mr. Burke's mind, a strong predilection in favour of the Papists, it is sufficient to state, that it certainly existed, and had a material influence on the advice which he gave to the Ministers on the important subject of Irish politics. So perfectly aware were the Irish Papists of this circumstance, that they made Mr. Burke's son their Secretary, for the *avowed* purpose of securing the advice, assistance, and support, of his father.*

* "In order," says Mr. Plowden, speaking of the Catholics, he being a Catholic himself, "to purge themselves in the eyes of government, of any sort of levelling democracy, which was so peculiarly obnoxious to Government;" (and to every friend of social order, he might have added,) "the Catholic Committee chose for their council and agent the son of Mr. Burke, conceiving, that he would give no advice, concur in no measure, abet no step, *without the privity, direction, and approbation of his father.*" "It appears to have been understood between the British and Irish Cabinets, that the opinions and countenance of Mr. Burke, at this period the triumphant and unrivalled champion of Church and State throughout Great Britain, should be permitted to have currency and support, also, through the kingdom of Ireland."

The character which Mr. Plowden, for obvious reasons, assigns to Mr. Burke's letter to Sir Hercules Langrishe, written, as he says, for the purpose of obviating any objection to *Catholic Emancipation*, and for demonstrating its compatibility with the Coronation-Oath, might easily be proved to be

The war with France had now begun, and Mr. Pitt was naturally anxious to unite every heart, and every arm, in his Majesty's dominions, in one grand effort against the common enemy. And Mr. Burke, unfortunately, succeeded in persuading him, that a repeal of the restrictive laws in force against the Papists would immediately produce that desirable effect. Instructions were, accordingly, sent over to the Viceroy, conformable to the resolution founded on this persuasion. And, utterly regardless of that consistency of character and of conduct, without which no Government can expect to secure either confidence or respect, the Irish Cabinet, whose adverse opinions had been too strongly and too recently declared to admit of a doubt; and the Irish Parliament, who had loudly, indignantly, and resolutely, rejected, but a few months before, an application for the same purpose,—and rejected it, not on the pretext that it was ill-timed, but on broad and general principles, now

any thing but correct and just. The letter is, certainly, written with great ability, as was every production of Mr. Burke's pen; but it would be no very difficult task to shew the fallacy of his reasoning, the invalidity of his conclusions, and the incompatibility of certain positions there advanced, with others brought forward in his admirable reflections on the French Revolution.

consented to become the instruments for carrying the determination of the British Cabinet into effect.

To Mr. Hobart, (now Earl of Buckinghamshire,) who was Secretary to the Viceroy, the awkward task of calling upon the Parliament to belie all their former sentiments, to violate all their recorded principles, and to act in direct contradiction to their lately-avowed resolutions, was assigned. He introduced the subject to the House, on the 4th of February, 1793, by acknowledging, that he was aware the measure which he had to propose would be disapproved by many of the gentlemen whom he most respected; and that he was also aware that the very measure had, in the last session, been rejected by the House, and that he had himself voted for its rejection;—but he asserted that a material change had taken place in the sentiments of the country, since that time;—the country were not then ripe for such a measure; but the circumstances of the present day would justify a very material alteration in the sentiments of the House. The conduct of the Roman Catholics had proved that they were perfectly attached to the constitution, and, at such a crisis, every man, who was attached to the constitution, should receive encouragement

from the House.* On what basis Mr. Hobart founded these bold and extraordinary assertions it would surpass the ordinary sagacity of human nature to discover. So far from any change having taken place in the minds of the Protestants of Ireland, it has been shewn, that, at the very last assizes, they had declared their almost unanimous opinions, through the medium of the Grand Juries, of the destructive tendency of those very measures which the Secretary now proposed to adopt, and their fixed resolution to oppose their adoption by every legal means. The conduct of the Catholics, too, had proved any thing but their attachment to the constitution. That the principal nobility and gentry of that persuasion, who formed a very inconsiderable part of the Catholic body, were, (most of them at least,) men of high respectability, incapable of entering into any scheme for the subversion of the government, it would be equally foolish and unjust to deny. But *their* principles, and *their* conduct, had undergone no alteration; they were the same, when their former petition was rejected, as they were at this moment. If it were meant, therefore, that *their* attachment to the constitution justified the change in the measures of

* Plowden's Historical Review, Vol. II. p. 407.

the Cabinet, it was evident, that the pretext was wholly destitute of foundation; since the Cabinet must have been equally convinced of that attachment when they refused to listen to their supplications, in the preceding session. The *defenders* were Catholics, and to talk of *their* attachment to the constitution was to insult the common sense of the House, and of the public. What there was in the conduct of the *Catholic Committee*, who had assumed regal power by issuing writs for assembling a Catholic Parliament in the capital, to justify the eulogy pronounced by the Secretary, it were vain to conjecture. Could Mr. Hobart, at this time, be ignorant of the facts which were, soon after, established by the Secret Committee of the House of Lords, instituted for the purpose of investigating the origin and causes of the spirit of treason and dissaffection, which the defenders manifested in various parts of the kingdom, in order that salutary measures might be adopted to check its progress? In the course of this inquiry it was proved, that John Sweetman, Secretary to the Catholic Committee in Dublin, wrote to an opulent Romanist of Dundalk, whose name was Coleman, on the subject of the defenders, many of whom were then imprisoned in that town; that, in one of his letters, dated August the 9th, 1792, Sweet-

man, in the name of the Catholic Committee, directed inquiries to be made, touching the offences of which the culprits were accused;—that the Catholic Committee interested themselves warmly for the defenders,—and that Coleman employed, at a considerable expence, an agent and counsel to act for several persons, then imprisoned on a charge of being defenders.*

A pamphlet, published, in the year 1792, by one of the most intelligent and efficient members of the Catholic body,† whose writings materially served the cause, because he assumed, at least, the appearance of moderation on most occasions, contained the following threat to the Protestant State.—"Will the Presbyterian Yeomanry of the North take up arms for the courtiers who enjoy pensions, for the persons who exact tithes, and for the landlords who exact rack-rents? They, too, are complainants; and if they unsheath the sword against their brethren, (meaning the Protestants of the Established Church) will they be likely to return it to the scabbard, until they have procured very ample

* See the Report of the Secret Committee of the Lords, in 1793.

† Musgrave's Memoirs, p. 97.

redress, and removed every cause of their complaints? Should that people ever be embodied, tithes, boroughs, and all the arts and practices of monopoly, will inevitably fall before them."

Proofs of disaffection, at this period, may be found in abundance; but proofs of general attachment to the constitution appear to have been confined to Mr. Hobart's speech. That gentleman declared the purport of his bill to be, to restore the elective franchise to the Papists, to enable them to vote in cities, and towns corporate, for magistrates; to render them capable of being jurors and magistrates; to enable them to endow a College, or University; and schools; and to hold commissions in the army and navy. Two only of the Irish members opposed the motion for bringing in this bill, Dr. Duigenan and Mr. Ogle. The former of these members proposed to add to the oath of allegiance, inserted in the bill, the following clause.—"Nor do we believe, that any other sect of Christians are, of course, to be doomed to eternal damnation hereafter, and that they may not enter into a state of salvation because they may happen to differ from us in religious tenets." But all their ecclesiastics, and the leading members of the laity, concurred in declaring, that the fundamental principles of

their religion rendered such an oath inadmissible.*

The bill was read a second time, on the 22d of February, when Mr. George Ponsonby, and M. de La Touche, spoke against it, but only one member *voted* against it. Indeed, the members seemed to vie with each other in their efforts to prove their servility to the Ministers, and to exhibit damning proofs of their own versatility and want of principle; and Mr. Hobart had the satisfaction to find, that they rather wanted a check than a stimulus, a bridle than a spur. Mr. George Knox made a motion for the admission of Catholic members to seats in Parliament; and, being seconded by Major

* Musgrave's Memoirs, p. 89. Although Mr. Plowden accuses Dr. Duigenan, on this occasion, in *general* terms, of having "collected together whatever the acrimonious bigotry of former days had suggested against the Catholics, and retailed it with new and enthusiastic bitterness;" (Vol. II, p. 408.) he does not venture to specify, much less to combat, any of the positions which he thus condemns. Nor does he even condescend to notice the Doctor's proposal for introducing the above addition to the oath, nor to say a single word on the declaration of his Popish brethren respecting it. From a Catholic historian, surely, some explanation of a matter, bearing so immediately upon the subject of discussion, might have been expected. But it sometimes happens, that duty demands exposition, where prudence imposes silence; and prudence here seems to have prevailed over duty.

Doyle, and supported by Colonel Hutchinson, and some others, Mr. Knox ventured to divide the House upon it; when it was rejected by 163 votes to 69. The bill, however, passed the Commons with very little further opposition.

When it was carried to the Lords, the Bishop of Killala (brother to Lord Ellenborough) stood forth a volunteer in its support. In the fervour of his zeal for the Catholic cause, he did not scruple to libel our ancestors, by ascribing those penal statutes, which originated in the paramount motive of self-preservation, to their bigotry and spirit of persecution. With equal ignorance and presumption, he reviled the laws themselves, which had, for seventy years, kept Ireland in a state of peace and tranquillity, as impolitic and unjust. And, with a disregard of truth, becoming neither his rank nor his profession, he represented the conduct of the Catholics as constantly and uniformly loyal.* The Lord Chancellor (Clare) expressed his wish to have suffered the bill to pass *sub silentio*; but when the general principles of anarchy, the rage of innovation, and the epidemical phrenzy, seemed to have reached that House; when inflammatory declamations, and ill-advised mistatements, came from the Reverend Bench,

* Plowden's Historical Review, Vol. II, p. 418.

it attached to the existing government, and he felt it necessary to rise in defence of the constitution. He justly imputed the observations of the Bishop of Killala, to his utter ignorance of the laws and constitution of the country from which he came, and of the laws and constitution of the country in which he lived. Then, disclaiming all personal bigotry or acrimony, he ably justified the penal code, on the ground of necessity, and exposed the pernicious tendency of Catholic tenets, as even recently proclaimed by their Primate, Doctor Troy.* His Lordship most pointedly condemned the powers assumed by the Popish Convention of levying taxes upon their community for defraying the expences, attending their claims and proceedings, which, if they were fair, just, and open, would require no such support.

The conduct of the Irish Parliament, in passing this bill, after their recent declarations upon the subject, fully justifies the following observation of a contemporary historian.—"The extraordinary inconsistency of the Irish Parliament, in rejecting, with indignant contempt, the claims of the Roman Catholics in the year 1792, and the tameness with which they now conceded, much more than what had been, at

* Idem Ibid. p. 419.

that time, demanded, joined to their fears and imbecility, in expressing their wishes to renounce their power and pre-eminence, to gratify a democratic faction, must convince every Irishman of spirit, and common sense, that such an Assembly, constantly oscillating between one extreme and another, and convulsed by party zeal, was incapable of promoting the peace and prosperity of his native country; and that he must depend for such promotion on nothing but the firmness, the wisdom, and disinterestedness, of an Imperial Parliament."*

Part of this observation applies to an offer made, by some of the Irish gentry at this time, for surrendering their property in boroughs, in compliment to the advocates of Parliamentary Reform. However its justice in that particular point may be questioned, it is undoubtedly correct in its application to the conduct of the Irish Parliament, on the subject of the law now passed for giving the elective franchise, and other political privileges, to the Papists. That conduct was most disgraceful, and fully justified the severe remarks which were made on it, by individuals of every party.

It must be remarked, that, by this measure of the Irish Legislature, the Romanists of that

* Musgrave's Memoirs, p. 89.

country were admitted to every civil privilege and advantage to which Protestants were admitted; save only that *an act of their own*, a refusal to take the oath of supremacy, and the oaths and engagements prescribed to be taken by the test act, precluded a few Irish Peers of that persuasion from voting in the House of Lords, and their Commoners from sitting in the House of Commons. They were also, by the same refusal, precluded from filling about two and thirty civil employments, among which were the offices of Lord Lieutenant, Lord Chancellor, Judges, and Commander in Chief of the army; in the persons filling which offices was vested the superior executive authority of the State—"Situations," as a contemporary writer judiciously observes, "of legislative and executive authority, which can never be conceded to Romanists, while they deny the supremacy of the State, and while even the form of a Protestant establishment is preserved in Ireland.*

However essential it was to the safety of the State to make these few reservations, or, to speak more correctly, to refuse to admit Papists to offices of high trust and command, without submitting to the same conditions, without sub-

* Duigenan's Answer to Grattan's Address, p. 26.

scribing to which no Protestant could hold them, and, by so admitting, to give them a marked superiority of privilege over the members of the Established Church, which would have been little less than treason to the country;—and, however important the concessions already made to the Papists were, and they could not fail to be important when they admitted them to the full enjoyment of religious and civil liberty; still, while there was something withholden, and something to acquire, it was perfectly clear, from their past conduct, that they would not rest satisfied. Mr. Burke, therefore, had woefully deceived himself, and deluded Mr. Pitt, when he taught him to believe, that the passing of this act, conferring privileges and favours unknown to the subjects of any other country dissenting from the established religion of the State, would conciliate the whole body of the Romanists, so as to secure their attachment to the government and constitution. The Irish government was very soon convinced of its inefficacy, and acknowledged the truth of *their* predictions, who had forewarned them, that indulgence would only encourage discontent, and that concession would only give birth to fresh demands.

The spirit of disaffection continued to spread throughout the country, without any

diminution of its rage, from the late concessions. The *United Irishmen* had associated on the plan of the affiliated societies in France, and a new attempt having been successfully made to unite the Romanists and the Presbyterians in one bond of hatred to the existing constitution, this society was chiefly composed of persons of both persuasions. They corresponded with the seditious clubs in every part of the British dominions, and carried on their treasonable plans with the utmost activity and vigour. In the inflammatory publications which they had circulated, with incredible industry, over the whole country, the necessity of *emancipating* the Romanists was strongly enforced; and, in return, the Catholic Committee, in Dublin, spoke of them with respect and gratitude. At one of the meetings of this Committee, in March, 1792, Mr. Keogh, a leading member, said,—"For a late publication, the Digest of the Popery Laws, the United Irishmen, and their respectable chairman, the honourable Simon Butler, demand our warmest gratitude."* And that the United Irishmen acted in co-operation with the defenders, appears certain from the report of the Irish House of Commons in 1798.

* Musgrave's Memoirs, p. 100.

The government found it necessary to pass, without delay, two bills, one for preventing the importation of arms, gunpowder, and ammunition, and the removing and keeping gunpowder, arms, and ammunition, without license; and the other for preventing the election or appointment of unlawful assemblies. Lord Westmoreland, in a conversation, at this time, with a private gentleman, on the treasonable disposition so generally manifested, asked,—"Suppose I were to sound a trumpet on Essex Bridge, to call the friends of government to my aid, who would follow me?"—The gentleman answered,—"Every Protestant in Ireland; they know they have no safety but in British connection."

The object of the United Irishmen was to separate Ireland from England, and to establish a democratic Republic on the ruins of the Monarchy. At the very formation of this treasonable association, its designs were unfolded to the public, in terms too plain to admit of mistake, by one of its most distinguished members, Mr. Theobald Wolfe Tone.—"It is proposed," said he, "that, at this juncture, a society should be instituted, having much of the *secrecy*, and somewhat of the ceremonial, attached to *free-masonry*; with so much *secrecy*, as may communicate *curiosity*, *uncertainty*, and

expectation, to the minds of surrounding men; with so much *impressive* and *affecting ceremony,* in all its internal economy, as, without impeding real business, may strike the soul, through the senses," (this was exactly the ceremonial of the Romish Church service,) " and, addressing the whole man, may animate his philosophy by the energy of his passions.

" Secrecy is *expedient* and *necessary;* it will make the bond of union more *cohesive,* and the *spirit* of that *union* more *ardent* and more *condensed.* It will invelope this *dense flame* with a cloud of GLOOMY AMBIGUITY, that will both *facilitate its own agency,* and, at the same time, *confound* and terrify its enemies by their ignorance of the *design,* the *extent,* the *direction,* and the *consequences;* it will *throw a veil* over those individuals whose *professional prudence* might make them wish to be *concealed,* until a manifestation of themselves become *absolutely necessary.*"

By a reference to Professor Robison's proofs of a conspiracy against all the religions and governments of Europe, there will be found a pretty exact similarity between this Irish Union and the German Union, as described by *Weishaupt,* its founder. It has been truly observed, that, at the time when this seditious society of United Irishmen was formed, those

grievances, which were afterwards urged as the chief *pretext* for its enormities, were not in existence.— No Convention Act, no Insurrection Act, no Treasonable Correspondence Act, had then passed;—every mode of communication was open, the war had not begun, nor was the public mind agitated by any alarm. In these circumstances, (in which there was not merely a liberty, but an absolute licentiousness of scope, both for discussion and co-operation) can it for a moment be supposed that men, who only wished to effect a temperate reform in Parliament (which was often alledged, in direct opposition to the fact, as the sole motive of these associated traitors) would have adopted "*gloomy, impenetrable secrecy*, as the first feature of their design? Was it in human nature thus deliberately to prefer *cowardly ambiguity* to *manly candour*, if it had not been felt that there was an indispensable necessity for such a procedure? And whence could the idea of such a necessity have arisen, but from the consciousness of a purpose which would not bear to be disclosed? It is not less the result of experience, than it is the maxim of Divine Wisdom, " that men love *darkness* rather than *light*, BECAUSE THEIR DEEDS ARE EVIL."*

* Essays on the Political Circumstances of Ireland, written during the Administration of Earl Camden, by Alexander Knox, Esq. p. 141, 142.

Confident of success, however, these traitors occasionally threw aside that veil of secrecy which they were advised to assume, and explained, with boldness, the objects of their machinations. They declared that the "general aim of the society should be, to make the light of philanthropy (a *pale* and *ineffectual light*) converge, and, by converging, kindle into *ardent, energetic, enthusiastic,* love for Ireland; that genuine, unadulterated, enthusiasm which descends from a luminous head to a *burning heart*, and *impels* the spirit of man to exertions greatly good, or unequivocally great. For this society is not to rest *satisfied* in drawing SPECULATIVE *plans of reform,* and *improvement,* but to be PRACTICALLY BUSIED in their *accomplishment.* Were the hand of *Locke* to hold from Heaven a *scheme* of *government;* most *perfectly adapted* to the *nature* and *capabilities* of the *Irish Nation,* it would drop to the ground a mere sounding scroll, were there no other means of giving it effect than *its own intrinsic excellence.*

"This society is likely to be a means the most powerful for the promotion of a great end.— What end? *The Rights of Man* in *Ireland;* the *greatest happiness* of the *greatest number* in this Island; the *inherent* and *indefeasible claims* of *every free nation* to *rest in this nation;* the WILL and the POWER to be happy, to *pursue*

the *common weal* as an *individual* pursues his *private welfare*, and to STAND, IN INSULATED INDEPENDENCE, AN IMPERATORIAL PEOPLE. To gain a knowledge of the real state of this heterogeneous country; to form a *summary* of the NATIONAL WILL and PLEASURE in points *most interesting to national happiness;* and when such a summary is formed, to put this DOCTRINE, as speedily as may be, into PRACTICE, will be the purpose of this *central society*, or lodge, from which *other lodges*, in *different towns*, will *radiate*.

" The GREATEST HAPPINESS of the GREATEST NUMBER. On the *rock of this principle* let the society rest; by *this*, let it judge and determine *every political question;* and *whatever is necessary* for *this purpose*, let it not be accounted *hazardous*, but rather our *interest*, our *duty*, our *glory*, and our *common religion.*— The rights of men are the rights of God; and to vindicate the one is to maintain the other: we must be free to serve him whose service is perfect freedom.

" This is *enthusiasm*; it is so; and who, that has a spark of Hibernicism in his nature, does not feel it kindle into a *flame of generous enthusiasm?* Who, that has a drop of sympathy in his heart, when he looks around him, and sees how HAPPINESS is *heaped up* in MOUNDS,

and how MISERY is *diffused* and *divided amongst the* MILLION, does not exclaim, *alas! for suffering!* and *oh! for the* POWER *to redress it!* And who is there that has enthusiasm sufficient to make an exclamation, would not *combine* with others, as honest as himself, to make the WILL live in the ACT, and to *swear* WE WILL REDRESS IT."

Well might it be asked,—Is this the voice of men seeking CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM? Is it not, on the contrary, as outrageous a denunciation as could be conveyed in language, not only against the constitution of *this* country, but against the order of society in *every* country? What is that decisive expression of *contempt* for all *speculative plans of reform*, that boastful resolution of being *busied in accomplishment*, and that emphatic despair of succeeding in any measure, however useful or suitable, without some other means of giving it effect besides its own *intrinsic excellence?* Do not these declarations alone amount to a determinate rejection of every constitutional idea, and as determinate an adoption of the worst revolutionary expedients? What are these *other* means? They are none of the resources of reason; none of the natural weapons of truth; these are all voted down, and discarded for ever in that imperious decree on the futility

of *intrinsic excellence;* for *these* are nothing but *intrinsic excellence* demonstrated, and urged with zeal and perseverance. What, then, are these means? They are *intrigue, cabal, conspiracy,* TERROR, (for there is no alternative) and, of course, every thing, however dreadful, to which *terror* relates, and without which it would become an unreal mockery, more contemptible than even *intrinsic excellence* itself.—And to what end are these dark expedients to be applied? We are not left to collect this from ambiguous hints; we are told, in what might be termed the very language of revolutions, that it is to break the tie which binds Ireland to the British Empire, to establish their former democracy in its boldest and broadest form, and to new-model property, so as to effect the widest possible distribution of it amongst the populace.*

Although the Romanists had recently experienced the most liberal indulgence from the Legislature, the Defenders, in the Summer of 1793, committed the most dreadful outrages in many parts of the kingdom, but particularly in the counties of Kerry, Cork, Wexford, Limerick, Queen's County, Meath, Westmeath, Dublin, Cavan, Monaghan, Louth, and in the

* Knox's Essays on Ireland, p. 151, 152.

liberties of Drogheda, Leitrim, Longford, Roscommon, Mayo, Sligo, Armagh, Down, Donegal, and Derry.* Nor were the Presbyterians of the North less active in their violent and rebellious proceedings.—In fact, it is evident that the Romanists and Presbyterians had cordially united for the destruction of the existing constitution, both ecclesiastical and civil, to which they were equally disaffected. But the latter wished to abolish every thing like an Established Church, the Hierarchy, and every *form* of religious worship; whereas the former intended, no doubt, to establish the Romish Church on the ruins of the Protestant Church, and, confiding in the superiority of their own numbers over those of their Presbyterian associates, to fix the Catholic ascendancy on a basis not to be shaken, and to the utter exclusion of the Protestant faith. The Presbyterians, indeed, at a subsequent period, became convinced that such was their object, and, accordingly, left them to fight their own battles.

The insurgents became so powerful, at the commencement of 1794, as to attack the military, in some parts of the country; while they held their seditious meetings in the very seat of

* Musgrave's Memoirs, p. 125.

government.—The Viceroy, however, the Earl of Westmoreland, perceiving the necessity of acting with decision, adopted the necessary measures for the repression and punishment of these audacious and criminal attempts. In this he was ably seconded by the magistrates of the capital, and particularly by Mr. John Giffard, the High Sheriff. These gentlemen, in the night of the 23d of May, 1794, repaired to a meeting of United Irishmen, held at Tailors' Hall, in Back Lane, dispersed the members, and seized their books and papers. A Clergyman, of the name of Jackson, was apprehended on a charge of treason, tried, condemned, and would have been executed, had he not escaped the sentence of the law, by the commission of suicide. He went to Ireland, as a Missionary from France, to settle, with the traitors there, the plan of an invasion by the French. Mr. Hamilton Rowan, who was concerned in the same plot, effected his escape from Newgate, in which prison he was confined for sedition. Such was the state of Ireland, when Lord Westmoreland was recalled, and when Lord Fitzwilliam was appointed to succeed him.

CHAPTER XL.

State of Ireland on the recal of Lord Westmoreland—Lord Fitzwilliam, Viceroy—Mr. Grattan, his chief counsellor—The Romanists encouraged by Mr. Grattan to demand their *emancipation*—Weak conduct of the Viceroy—Lord Fitzwilliam recalled—Factious language of Mr. Grattan to the Romanists—Lord Camden appointed Viceroy—Attempt to assassinate the Lords' Justices—Judicious conduct of Mr. Pelham, (now Earl of Chichester) Secretary to the Viceroy—The Parliament reject, by a decisive majority, the claims of the Romanists—The United Irishmen arm themselves—The Yeomanry established—Insidious conduct of the Catholics on this occasion—The French attempt to invade Ireland, at the instigation of the rebels—but are prevented by a storm—Proclamations issued against treasonable associations—Seizure of arms by the King's troops—Message from the Viceroy, on the insurrection in Ulster—Mr. Grattan describes the Insurgents as *peaceable* and loyal subjects, and imputes the disturbances to the measures taken to quell them—Mr. Grattan's statements confuted by the declaration of the rebels themselves—The system of concession carried by government to a dangerous and unwarrantable extent—Remarks on the Popish establishment at Maynooth—Several of the Students join the rebels—M'Nevin sent to the continent to hasten the departure of a French force—

A French Agent arrives in London—Conduct of the Opposition in England and Ireland at this period—False conclusions of Mr. Fox—His misrepresentations corrected.—The assertions of Mr. Fox and Mr. Erskine contradicted by the depositions of the principal rebels—Lord Moira's speech in the Irish Parliament, answered by the Lord Chancellor Clare—The gross impositions practised on Lord Moira detected and exposed—Lord Clare takes a view of the conduct of the British government towards Ireland, and proves it to have been one continued system of conciliation from the year 1779—Inconsistency of Lord Moira's present theory with his past practice—Lord Clare ascribes the increased violence of the disaffected to Lord Moira's speech in the British Parliament—Lord Moira's motion rejected by 35 to 10—Similar motion in the House of Commons, by Sir Lawrence Parsons, negatived by 156 to 19—Meeting of the rebels at Shane's Castle—They announce the establishment of an union with the disaffected in England and Scotland—Loyal men pointed out for assassination in the newspapers devoted to the rebels.—The United Irishmen in the county of Down declare Lord Moira to be a tyrant—Measures for the grand attack concerted by the rebels—Remarkable interview between Hughes and Neilson, two of the leaders of the rebels, and Mr. Grattan, at Tinnehinch—The law of misprision of treason explained—Government censured for weakness, in not making this interview the subject of a legal investigation—The whole plot of the rebels disclosed to government by Thomas Reynolds, who had been persuaded to join them—Many of the principal conspirators seized in Dublin—Preparations for the intended attack on the capital—Reward offered for the apprehension of Lord Edward Fitzgerald—He is taken in Dublin—Apprehension of the Sheares, and other rebels—The rebellion breaks out on the 23d of May—Neilson seized

in reconnoitering Newgate—Disaffection of the Roman Catholic Yeomen—The Roman Catholic servants engaged in the conspiracy—The rebellion breaks out in various parts of the kingdom—Martial law proclaimed—Rebels defeated in different places by the Yeomanry—The rebels take Emniscorthy, and obtain possession of Wexford—They are joined by the Romanists of the neighbouring counties—They defeat a body of troops commanded by Colonel Walpole—The battle of Ross—Lord Mountjoy killed—The rebels forced to retreat—221 Protestants murdered, by the rebels, at Scullabogue—Rebels defeated at Arklow—They attack the town of Antrim—Lord O'Neil killed—They are defeated in the county of Down by General Nugent—They fortify the strong post of Vinegar Hill—Are attacked there by the Loyalists, and compelled to fly—Cruelties exercised on the Protestants in the Rebel Camp—Lord Camden recalled, and Lord Cornwallis appointed to succeed him—97 Protestants murdered in cold blood, on the bridge at Wexford—Conduct of Dr. Caulfield, the Popish bishop of Wexford, during the rebellion in that country---He gives his public benedictions to the rebels---Accused, by one of his own priests, of having directed the last battle in Wexford to be fought, and of blessing men whom he ought to have excommunicated---Obtains a certificate of loyalty from Lord Cornwallis—Denies that protections granted by priests were respected—The contrary proved to be the fact, from a protection granted by himself—Objections of the Opposition, and of the government, in imputing the rebellion to other than religious causes—A great mass of the rebels proved to be influenced by religious motives—Loyalty of the Catholic nobility and principal gentry—Danger of Popish principles acting upon low and uninformed minds—Several of the rebel chiefs taken, and executed at Wexford—Bagnal Harvey acknowledges that the Popish priests were

deeply concerned in the rebellion, and that the extirpation of Protestants was their main design—Battle of Castlecomer—Execution of the two Sheares---The other rebel chiefs are pardoned, on condition of disclosing the whole circumstances of the conspiracy, and of transporting themselves for life---Twenty of them are sent to Fort George, in Scotland, to be confined there till a peace---A body of French troops land in Killala-bay, and are joined by a great number of rebels---Several Irish priests flock to their standard---Father Dease, being taken prisoner, declares that the priests were encouraged to join the French by Dr. Bellew, the Popish Bishop of the Diocese---The French advance to Castlebar, where they defeat the King's troops ---They march towards Sligo---receive a check from a small corps under Colonel Vereker---Are overtaken by General Lake---Surrender at discretion---The French express the greatest contempt for their Irish Allies—Ridicule their bigotry, and express their astonishment, at finding the Pope so suddenly in Ireland, after having driven him out of Italy---End of the rebellion.

[1798.] By the firmness and vigour which Lord Westmoreland displayed, after the impolitic concessions which had been made to the Romanists, Ireland had, at last, been restored to a state of comparative tranquillity. The leading nobility and gentry had professed themselves satisfied with the indulgences which they had received, and seemed disposed to wait till a more favourable period for pressing their further claims to a participation of political power and influence. The great body of the

Romanists, indeed, including the Defenders, and no small portion of the United Irishmen, had resolved to exert every effort to produce a revolution in the country, on French principles, and were silently preparing means to elude the vigilance of the government, and to secure the accomplishment of their object. In this state of things, Lord Westmoreland was recalled, and Lord Fitzwilliam appointed to succeed him as Viceroy.

Mr. Grattan was the chosen adviser of the Lord Lieutenant, and he had taken special care, before the arrival of his patron in Ireland, to assume great merit to himself for the measures which he had recommended him to pursue, in favour of the Romanists, and to prepare the Romanists themselves to second his exertions by presenting petitions, from every quarter of the kingdom, not soliciting as a favour, but claiming as a right, a full and perfect communication of all privileges and offices of the State, without exception, and that every law which created any distinction between them and Protestants should be repealed.*

The weakness of the Viceroy in thus submitting himself to the guidance of this rash demagogue, in disgracing his government by

* Duigenan's Answer to Grattan's Address, p. 22.

dismissing from their offices all the most tried and faithful servants of the Crown, and by admitting to his Court and Table the most inveterate enemies of the Protestant Church;* and, lastly, by pledging himself to a Legislative Act, which he was not authorized to propose, nor able to carry; soon convinced Mr. Pitt of the necessity of appointing another Viceroy.

The anger of Grattan and the Ponsonbies, on the recall of their favourite Viceroy, was wrought up to the highest pitch. The former, in an address to the Roman Catholics of Dublin, urged them to continue their demands while the Ministry were embarrassed by the war; and told them that it depended on themselves whether they would permit the return of their *old Taskmasters* to power.† The Pon-

* Idem Ibid. p. 23.

† Grattan's expressions were these:—"I tremble at the return to power of your old *taskmasters*. That combination which galled the country with its tyranny, insulted her by its manners, exhausted her by its rapacity, and slandered her by its malice; should such a combination (at once inflamed as it must be now by the favour of the *British Court*, and by the reprobations of the *Irish People*) return to power, I have no hesitation to say, that they will *extinguish Ireland, or Ireland must remove them*. It is not your case only, but that of the nation; I find the country already *committed* in the struggle; I beg to be committed along with her, and to abide the issue of her fortunes."—*Grattan's Address to the Citizens of Dublin.*

sonbies, by their extensive country influence, procured popular meetings to be convened, and addresses to be voted to Parliament, deprecating the removal of their patron. Similar efforts were made in the House of Commons,

It is justly observed, by a temperate and intelligent contemporary writer, that this address (which contained much other inflammatory matter of the same kind) was calculated to rouse the passions of the multitude to madness.

"When the indigent, the ignorant, the inflammable, vulgar read or heard of *dreadful guardians* succeeding, of *old task-masters* returning, of *tyranny, insult, rapacity, slander, malice*, and, above all, when they received that unequivocal assurance, "THEY WILL EXTINGUISH IRELAND, OR IRELAND MUST REMOVE THEM;" what, in the name of Heaven, must have been their apprehensions? Who, in their view, would be the dreadful guardians? Evidently those who were to succeed Lord Fitzwilliam. Who?--- the old task-masters. Those, of course, who had been in power before Lord Fitzwilliam took possession of the government;" and to whom, be it added, the Romanists were indebted for the possession of a more rational, a more extensive, and better-secured, civil liberty, than the most favoured subjects of any state in the known world, those of Great Britain only excepted.——

"And what was to be done with these? *Why Ireland must* REMOVE *them, or they would* EXTINGUISH *Ireland.* What, then, on the whole, was it possible for them to conclude, but that on a new Chief Governor attempting to land in the country, they ought to rise in a mass, and by one grand effort rid themselves of all those whom they were taught to consider as obnoxious to them, either in the name of expulsion or of *extermination.* An inflamed multitude would be little apt to

but they failed of success. The motions for censure were negatived, and a strong sense of approbation of the conduct of the British Cabinet was manifested by the House. During the state of inflammation produced by these party-struggles, Lord Camden arrived to take upon him the government of Ireland. On the evening of his landing, an ineffectual attempt was

enquire, whether the word *remove* meant the one or the other.

"Now could my Lord George Gordon, or could, indeed, any *enragé* that ever existed, have taken a more promising method of preparing the popular mind for insurrection. At the very moment, too, that Mr. Grattan held out this direct invitation to riot, tumult, and rebellion, for in no other light can his virulent address be considered, he expressed his full conviction that the very object for which he, and the Romanists, were contending, which they, absurdly, called Catholic *Emancipation*, must, and would, be obtained. "Your Emancipation will pass, rely upon it; your Emancipation must pass." Why Mr. Grattan, therefore, in the midst of all this certainty of success, should use a language which despair itself would not have justified;—Why, when, by his own acknowledgement, the Roman Catholics had still so fair a prospect, he, their friend and advocate, should thus, like

"Cæsar's spirit, ranging for revenge,
"With *Até* by his side, come hot from hell—
"Cry havock, and let slip the dogs of war,"

ingenious men may conjecture, but I shall not pretend to decide."

Knox's Essays on the political circumstances of Ireland, p. 7—10.

made to assassinate the Lords-Justices Fitzgibbon and Foster, who had discharged the duties of the government after the departure of Lord Fitzwilliam, and who were generally supposed to be most obnoxious to the late Administration. But the riot was suppressed, and, in a few days, the new Viceroy found himself at perfect ease in the tranquil exercise of his office.

The Viceroy's principal Secretary was Mr. Pelham, (now Earl of Chichester) who applied himself assiduously to the discovery of such measures as should secure the Royal authority in Ireland. He soon perceived that the irritation which was artfully supported, arose, in a great degree, from the abundance of wild and visionary notions which issued hourly from the press. He endeavoured, therefore, like a wise Statesman, to employ this engine in order to give a new direction to the public mind.—He became himself a member of literary societies; encouraged discussions of abstract and harmless questions of rural, and even domestic, economy. He ingratiated himself with the learned idlers of the nation; and so far succeeded in his view as either to detach them from political topics, or to direct their political efforts to the useful purpose of soothing and

instructing, instead of inflaming and misleading, the people.

By this time the United Irishmen had formed a close connection with the French Directory, and looked to them principally for the success of their rebellious plans. During the short Administration of Lord Fitzwilliam, their operations had been almost disregarded; as they wanted that consequence in the public eye which discontent, patronized by a Parliamentary opposition, seldom fails to command. Upon his Lordship's removal, their rancour, fomented by the venomous breath of faction, burst forth with additional fury; and the public discovery, which had been recently made, on the trial of Jackson, the spy of the French Government, that Theobald Wolfe Tone, the founder of the Society (who was also the avowed agent of the Catholic Committee) had been selected to convey information from the Rebels of Ireland to the Directory at Paris, taught them that they could no longer conceal their views beneath the flimsy mask of Parliamentary Reform and Catholic Emancipation. This discovery, too, had no slight effect on the decision which took place on the discussion of the claims of the Romanists in Parliament, where they were rejected by a decisive majority.

The success of the French armies, and the defection of those Allies in concert with whom Great Britain had begun the war, opened such a prospect of success to the rebellious, that the needy and discontented of every country were easily persuaded to follow the footsteps of the profligate Parisians. The war began to effect public credit; disappointed speculators were obvious implements for the purposes of treason; and clubs of an infinite variety of denominations were instituted under the patronage of the parent society of United Irishmen. For preparing the minds of the poor and the ignorant for the furtherance of their views, they encouraged school boys and apprentices to assemble in order to hear seditious lectures, and to be instructed in doctrines suitable to the use intended to be made of their inexperience. By these means, the whole mass of the lower orders, in the Capital of Dublin, was infected. Some of the youthful traitors were betrayed, by their zeal, into the commission of crimes, which called for the interposition of the law. And one or two examples having been, necessarily, made, the system could no longer be sustained without danger, and was, accordingly, abandoned.—It was then determined, by the society, to adopt an universal plan of military organiza-

tion; to provide the common people with weapons of a simple construction and of little cost; and thus to furnish themselves with a sufficient force against the arrival of those troops which had been promised by France. But a plan so extensive, required a considerable time for its completion. It was amongst the old Volunteer Companies of the Northern Presbyterians that it could be begun with effect; and, amongst these, the old jealousy of Roman Catholic predominance could only be subdued by the exclusion, at first, of all persons of that persuasion. This jealousy had existed from the period of the Revolution, and had, at different times, been productive of mutual outrage. For a while, however, it gave place to the overruling desire of subverting the Constitution.

In the autumn of 1796, government found it expedient to propose to all loyal subjects to embody themselves, as corps of yeomanry, for the defence of the country. The Protestant members of the corporation, and other inhabitants of Dublin, set the example, by raising four regiments of infantry, and four troops of horse. But this wise and salutary measure, which eventually proved the salvation of the country, was strongly opposed by the leading Romanists of Dublin, and by all the active members of the Catholic Committee. Their efforts, however, to prevent its adoption

having proved ineffectual, they waited on Mr. Pelham, and asked permission to raise a corps of Romanists; but they were, very properly, told that, if they wished to serve their King and country, they might join their Protestant fellow-subjects. Thus foiled, they published a string of resolutions, replete with invectives against government, for having presumed to adopt a measure so admirably calculated to defeat the plans of those whose object was to destroy the civil and ecclesiastical constitution of the realm. In the course of six months, the patriotic corps of yeomanry amounted to thirty-seven thousand men, and the number was afterwards extended to fifty thousand.*

In the summer of 1796, Lord Edward Fitzgerald, and Mr. Arthur O'Connor, who had taken an active part in the rebellious projects of the United Irishmen, which had now acquired a formidable degree of consistency, had an interview with the French General, Hoche, in Switzerland, at which it was settled, that a French force should be sent to the assistance of the Irish rebels as soon as possible. The attempt was accordingly made at the close of that year, when fifteen thousand French troops reached Bantry Bay; but the fleet being dispersed in a

* Musgrave's Memoirs, p. 159.

storm, and having lost several of their ships, the plan was defeated for the present.

The attempt, however, served to convince the rebels that the French were serious in their promises of support; and they were accordingly resolved to exert every effort for completing that plan of military organization, which would enable them to act with effect, whenever the moment for action should come. In November, 1796, a proclamation was issued, stating, that "divers ill-affected persons had entered into illegal and treasonable associations, in the counties of Down, Antrim, Tyrone, Londonderry and Armagh; and, for effecting their treasonable designs, had assassinated divers loyal subjects, and threatened to assassinate all others who should endeavour to detect their treasons, or should enrol themselves under officers commissioned by his Majesty, for the defence of the kingdom, and had also procured arms and ammunition; that some evil-minded persons had broken open the King's stores at Belfast, and took thereout ten barrels of gunpowder; and that many large bodies of men had embodied and arrayed themselves, under a pretence of sowing corn and digging potatoes."

In consequence of these open acts of rebellion, General Lake, who commanded the King's troops, displayed the utmost vigilance and

activity, in searching for, and seizing, the stores of arms collected by the insurgents; in which he was materially assisted by Sir George Hill, whose zeal and vigour, in the suppression of treason and sedition, were of infinite service. In the course of the year 1797, nearly 130,000 arms, of different descriptions, were seized in the province of Ulster alone. On the thirteenth of March, 1797, the Viceroy sent a message to both Houses of Parliament, stating, "That an organized system of robbery and murder existed in the province of Ulster, which bade defiance to the exertions of the civil power; and that, by the firm and temperate conduct of the general of the district, a considerable quantity of arms had been taken; and that he hoped, by a continuance of vigorous measures, the constitutional authority of the civil power would be restored." In the debate which followed this message, Mr. Grattan, with his accustomed acrimony, condemned the coercive measures to which government had had recourse for quelling those disturbances, which he had the ignorance, or the effrontery, to ascribe to the provocation which his Majesty's *peaceable* and *loyal* subjects had received from wanton and unnecessary acts of severity. Admirably qualified must that man be, for high situations of trust and importance in a government, and in an eminent degree must he possess

all the necessary qualifications for a statesman, who can thus confound the *effect* with the *cause*, and gravely advise a recourse to acts of indulgence and concession for restoring armed rebels to order, and for inspiring them with a proper sense of their duty and their allegiance! If Mr. Grattan were sincere in his assertions, he must have been blinded by that spirit of party, which raged in his bosom with greater violence than in that of any other of the demagogues of the day, and which displayed itself, on every occasion, without intermission, as without diminution. And if he really believed that any concessions, short of the absolute surrender of the ecclesiastical and civil constitution of the realm, could satisfy the rebels, his credulity must have exceeded any bounds which a knowledge of the human character will allow a man to prescribe to the weakness of a rational being.—Fortunately, for the truth of history, the authority of the leading rebels themselves supplies the most unqualified contradiction to all his representations on this subject, as well as to all the statements, on the same points, of his parliamentary associates and friends, in Ireland and in England. Every mode of conciliation, which human wisdom, or human ingenuity, could devise, had been already tried; during the present reign, nothing had been omitted which could tend to

attach the Irish Papists to the government; this spirit had even been carried much farther than sound policy could warrant; indeed the cup of concession had been drained to the very dregs. Not only had the fullest freedom of religious worship, the most perfect liberty of conscience and of conduct, been secured to the Papists; but they had been allowed the privilege of interference in the formation of the legislative body; and enjoyed every other political privilege which Protestants enjoyed, with the very few exceptions which have been before stated, and none of which could affect the great mass of the people. Nay, government had gone still farther, and, as if anxious for the diffusion and perpetuation of *error*, to apply the mildest term to the superstitious rites and tenets of the church of Rome, they had erected and endowed a Popish College, for students in theology, and for providing the followers of Popery with an ample supply of priests. The annals of history do not present a similar instance of concession, in any country, in which there has existed an established church! The pretence for this act of ill-timed, and most undeserved, liberality, on the part of the Irish government, was to prevent sending young Papists, who were intended for the church, abroad for education. Dr. Duigenan, in his "Fair Representation of the State of Ireland," declares, that £40,000

were given out of the public purse to the trustees appointed to manage this establishment, and to receive donations for it; that £8,000 per annum had been regularly granted for the support of two hundred students. He farther states, that it afterwards appeared, upon an enquiry made by the Irish Parliament of 1798, that *sixty-nine* students only were maintained in this College; that it was currently reported, and very generally believed, that about *thirty-six* students from this monastery, had, upon the breaking out of the rebellion in that year, joined the insurgents, and fought at Kilcock and other places, against the King's troops. Certain it is, that sixteen or seventeen were expelled from it on account of rebellion, but the governors waited, *with becoming prudence*, till the rebellion was suppressed, before they executed this act of necessary and politic severity.*—Some students had been slain in action, and others fled to escape justice. The author, above quoted, informs us, that the President of this College was Dr. Hussey, the titular Catholic Bishop of Waterford, who published, previous to the rebellion of 1798, "A Pastoral Letter," of treason and rebellion, in consequence of which he was obliged to fly that kingdom, and is said to have died in

* *Fair Representation, &c.* p. 220.

exile.* The annual allowance which the Protestant Parliament of Ireland granted to this Popish institution, has been continued and extended by the Imperial Parliament.

The views entertained by the Catholic Committee, had not been such as to entitle the body which they represented to these extraordinary indulgences. It has been seen that their agent, Tone, was the founder of the *United Irishmen*; their Secretary was afterwards sent into exile for his treasonable practices; many of their members were implicated in the rebellion; some fled from justice; and others were strongly suspected. One of their principal advisers, M'Nevin, was a member of the Rebel Irish Directory in 1797; and another, Lewins, was Minister Plenipotentiary from the Rebels to the French Directory. It is also known, that they gave their agent, Tone, £1534 2*s.* 6*d.* for his trouble in composing those manifestoes with which they corrupted the public mind; that they paid the sum of £2113 1*s.* 4*d.* to PRINTERS alone, and that, upon the attainment of their *ultimatum*, in 1793, they voted £2000 for a

* *Strictures upon an Historical Review of the State of Ireland, by Francis Plowden, Esq. or a justification of the conduct of the English Governments in that country, from the reign of Henry the Second, to the Union of Great Britain and Ireland*, p. 142.

statue to his Majesty, (which they never erected) and immediately after issued a mandate for levying farther contributions on their body, "for the heavy and growing expences of the Catholic cause."

In June, 1797, Doctor M'Nevin was sent, by the United Irishmen, to the continent, to press the expected succours from France. He had an interview with the French resident at Hamburgh, to whom he presented a memorial to be forwarded to the Directory, in which he detailed the preparations which had been made for a general rising of the Irish rebels. The French Republic was assured, that all the expences which she either had incurred, or should incur, for affording assistance to the rebels, should be faithfully repaid, out of the confiscated lands of the Church, and the property of the Loyalists; and M'Nevin was authorized to raise, either in France or Spain, half a million of money, for the use of the Insurgents;—to solicit a further supply of arms, and to engage in their service as many of the Irish officers, in the service of France, as he could persuade to join them. Both M'Nevin and Lewins pressed their suit, at Paris, with great eagerness; and they declared the resolution of the rebels to be the destruction of the existing constitution in Church and State, a total sepa-

ration of Ireland from England, and the establishment of an independent Irish Republic, the Directory of which was already named.

The French Directory, not chusing to place implicit reliance on the partial statements of these emissaries of rebellion, sent a confidential agent to England, to collect accurate information respecting the real state of Ireland. Finding a difficulty in proceeding to Dublin, this agent requested a proper person might meet him in London, qualified to afford him the necessary satisfaction.—This person is supposed to have been Lord Edward Fitzgerald; and the representation which he made was such as induced the French government to promise efficacious assistance to the rebels without delay.

Some difference occurred between the rebel emissaries and the French Ministers.—The former limited their application for succours to ten thousand men, wishing only for a sufficient force to enable them to subdue the King's troops, and to establish their projected Republic. But the French intended to send a more considerable force for securing the entire subjection of the country, and for holding it when subdued. This difference, however, was not sufficient to occasion any coolness, much less a rupture of the negotiation. On the contrary, the French government adopted active measures for

carrying their promises of assistance into effect. And, in the autumn of ninety-seven, the French, Spanish, and Dutch fleets, were to have formed a junction, for the purpose of conveying an army to Ireland. But the two victories, gained by Admirals Duncan and Jervis, frustrated their plans, and compelled them to postpone, at least, their designs upon that country.

While the spirit of rebellion thus raged in Ireland; while the laws were publicly reviled and violated; while magistrates, jurors, and witnesses, were assassinated at noon day; and while a system of terror was enforced by the rebels, as severe in principle, and as operative in effect, as that which had prevailed in France since the destruction of the Monarchy; the English and Irish oppositions seemed to vie with each other in misrepresenting the causes of this state of things; in endeavouring to palsy the energy of government; and in impairing, by their inflammatory speeches, vigour to disaffection, and encouragement to revolt. Lord Moira and Mr. Grattan, the one in England, the other in Ireland, had even ventured to impute the rebellious spirit to the very measures which were adopted to suppress it. His Lordship was so far deceived, by the misrepresentations of his Irish informants, that he had not the smallest notion that his own domain was the

very scene of rebellion, and the spot chosen by the rebels for concealing a large quantity of their instruments of murder. He could descry no outrages but in the troops who were sent to oppose the rebels; and either so inveterate was his Lordship's prejudice, or so erroneous his information, that facts, notorious to every one else, wholly escaped his observation; while others, of a different nature, acquired an opposite colour and complexion from those which they exhibited to the eyes of common observers.

Mr. Fox, in his speech on the motion of Mr. Grey, on the subject of Parliamentary Reform, in the spring of 1797, had carried misrepresentation to a much greater extent. He asked, by what means the seditious societies in Ireland had increased from a small number to an hundred thousand men; and who had been the converts and proselytes who had swelled their numbers to so gigantic a size?—and he thus answered his own question, "Obviously, the men who had no such desire, no such feelings, no such design originally; obviously the persons who had no other objects in view, in all the petitions which they presented, and in all the applications which they made, than Catholic Emancipation, and Reform of Parliament. This is admitted by the Report."—Most certain it is, that the

Report of the Secret Committees of the Irish Parliament admitted no such thing. It admitted, indeed, what was well known to be the fact, that the seditious societies *professed* to have no other object; but the insincerity of such professions was too obvious to impose even on the most credulous. Mr. Fox, however, proceeded to state, that "the spirit of reform spread over the country; they made humble, earnest, and repeated applications to the *Castle* for redress, but *there* they found *a fixed determination to resist every claim.** They made their application to all the eminent and considerable characters in the country, who had, on former occasions, distinguished themselves in the popular cause. But, unfortunately, they were so alarmed by the French Revolution, and by the cry set up by Ministers, of the danger of infection, that they could not listen to the complaint. What was the consequence? These bodies of men, who found it in vain to expect redress from the government at the Castle, or from the Parliament,

* When it is remembered that this bold assertion was advanced in 1797, after every concession, compatible with the existence of the Constitution, had been made by the government, who had even gone beyond the *ultimatum* of the Catholic Committe, as published by themselves, it will not be considered unjust to remark, that Mr. Fox made no scruple to sacrifice truth at the shrine of party.

and having no where else to recur to, joined the societies, whom the Report accused of cherishing the desire of separation from England; and they imbibed and became converts to those notions of frantic ambition which the Report laid to their charge, and which threatened consequences so dreadful and alarming, that no man could contemplate them without horror and dismay."

So far was this representation from the fact, that not one in a hundred of the United Irishmen ever joined in a petition for Parliamentary Reform; or ever considered a Reform but as a short step gained on the road to Revolution. Even when a motion for Reform was made, in the Irish Parliament, in the spring of 1794, the member who seconded the motion was heard to observe, that he and his friends had so little encouragement from the public, that they only brought the business forward from a regard to their own consistency,—"For," said he, "how can we hope to succeed, when we are not supported by *a single petition?*"*

That *Reform* was only desirable as the means of facilitating a revolution, was acknowledged by several of the rebels themselves. Dr. Drennan, the organ of the United Irishmen, in his letter to Lord Fitzwilliam, observed, that "*any*

* Knox's Essays on Ireland, p. 178.

kind of Reform, sincerely put into execution, would do *much* to *please*, but *not* to SATISFY, the people. *Any* Reform once made, would make EVERY *Reform* afterwards more easy; when adopted, it would tend to perfect itself. It may walk on as Catholic Emancipation, from *gradual* to TOTAL;" in other words, from *Reform* to *Revolution*. Mr. Erskine had observed, in his memorable pamphlet on the war, speaking of the Irish societies, that, "It is demonstrated, that a design to reform the abuses in the government is not at all connected with disloyalty to its establishment."* But Mr. Erskine, whose sources of information were certainly not the most pure, or the most correct, and who exhibited not the smallest proof of having taken sufficient pains, in the knowledge which they afforded, to separate truth from falsehood, was flatly contradicted by the Report of the Committee of the Irish House of Lords, which was founded on the depositions of persons, taken upon oath before them. It is there stated, that, "the demand for a Reform, and the Catholic Emancipation, were held out merely as a pretence for the associations, and with a desire to seduce persons, who were not acquainted with their

* View of the causes and consequences of the war with France. Edition 31. p. 16.

traitorous designs, to unite with them."* And what renders the validity of this statement indisputable, and puts an end to all farther doubt or cavil on the question, is the testimony of Doctor M'Nevin himself, who acknowledged that he had seen a resolution of the Leinster Provincial Committee of 19th of February, 1798, "that they would not be diverted from their purpose *by any thing which could be done in Parliament*, as nothing short of the total emancipation of their country would satisfy them" evidently meaning that they would continue in rebellion till they had succeeded in separating Ireland from the British Crown, and in establishing an independent republic on the ruins of the existing Monarchy. And when the Doctor was farther asked, "Do you think the mass of the people in the provinces of Leinster, Munster, and Connaught, care the value of this pen, or the drop of ink it contains, for *Parliamentary Reform*, or *Catholic Emancipation?*"† He immediately answered,—"I AM SURE THEY DO NOT."* Being asked, how he accounted for the cruelties exercised by the rebels on *Protestants*, he answered, "The lower order of Catholics con-

* Lord's Reports, p. 2.

† Report of the Secret Committee of the Lords in 1798, App. 31, p. 278.

sider *Protestant* and *Englishman* as synonimous, and as their natural enemy;—the same Irish word—*Sassena*—signifies both." When the question was put to Mr. Emmet, a Barrister, another of the rebels, whether he thought the mass of the people cared for Parliamentary Reform, or Catholic Emancipation, his answer was,—"I believe the mass of the people do not care a feather for Catholic Emancipation; neither did they care for Parliamentary Reform, till it was explained to them as leading to other objects which they looked to, principally the abolition of tithes. I am sure, if tithes were abolished, the people, on taking new leases, would be obliged to pay more in proportion for lands than the value they now pay for tithes—my wish was to destroy the present Established Church, and to have no Church-establishment. The people were also taught to consider that when they became members of a democracy, their condition would be bettered." He afterwards stated, that certainly the revolutionary government did not intend to have any ecclesiastical establishment. Mr. Oliver Bond, another of the United Irishmen, confirmed the testimony of his associates, by stating that "Catholic emancipation was a mere pretence," that the people did not care for Parliamentary Reform; that a paper, called the Press, esta-

blished and conducted by Arthur O'Connor, was set up to "forward the cause of the union," a "principal object of which" was to abolish all ecclesiastical establishments.

The Opposition, however, shut their eyes against conviction, and obstinately persisted in ascribing the disturbances in Ireland to the oppressions of government. Mr. Fox took the lead on these subjects, and by his speeches, both in the House of Commons, and at the Whig Club, contributed, in no small degree, to keep the flame of rebellion alive in Ireland. So violent, and inflammatory, indeed, were some of the Parliamentary harangues, on this dangerous topic, that it was deemed necessary to exclude strangers from both Houses, during the discussions. Lord Moira, after having, in the winter of 1797, expatiated largely on the loyalty of the Irish people, the severity of the government, and the cruelty of the troops, repaired to Ireland, at the commencement of the following year; and, on the 19th of February, delivered his sentiments, to the same effect, in the Irish House of Lords. He was there destined, however, to meet an adversary, who, powerful in argument, but still more strong in facts and proofs, was enabled to expose the fallacy of his information, to correct his misrepresentations, and to destroy the whole fabric of

error, composed, as it was, of sandy materials, which the credulity of a generous and unsuspecting mind had been led to employ, as possessing firmness and stability. The speech, in answer to his Lordship, by the Irish Chancellor, Lord Clare, contains a succinct, but luminous, account of the origin and progress of the Irish rebellion. It forms a most important historical document; and will remain, for the instruction of posterity, not only as a masterly display of manly and impressive eloquence, but as a monument of genuine patriotism. In reference to Lord Moira's speech in the House of Lords, he asked on what principle did his Lordship propose an address of a British House of Parliament, calling upon the Crown to interpose its paternal influence in a matter solely cognizable by an Irish Parliament, in the repeal of a law of Ireland of fundamental import to the Irish Constitution? On what principle did he state that the feudal tyranny of the *Corfeu** had been

* In his speech of November 22, 1797, in the British House of Peers, Lord Moira made this statement.---"One night, after *nine o'clock*, a party of soldiers saw a light in a house by the road side---they went and ordered it to be extinguished immediately: the people of the house begged that the light might be suffered to remain, because there was a child, belonging to the family, in convulsion fits, who must expire for want of help, if the people were to be without fire and candle.

established in that country; that the horrible practices of the Inquisition had been put in force; that the natives had been put to the torture to force a confession of their own supposed crimes, or the guilt of their neighbours? Lord Clare professed his ignorance of the principle, but observed, with concern, that these exaggerations had passed uncontroverted through every seditious newspaper of Great Britain and Ireland.

His Lordship truly observed, that it was too much the custom in both countries to drown truth and reason in noise and clamour. Lord Moira had imputed the treasonable system

But this request had NO EFFECT." Nothing can shew the magnitude and extent of the imposition which had been practised upon the generous nature of this nobleman, who has a mind too honourable to be subjected, for a moment, to the imputation of having become a voluntary instrument for the propagation of calumny, than the strange inaccuracy of this statement, which was, indeed, directly contrary to the truth. The following is the correct account of the transaction to which his lordship here referred.

" Lieutenant STEEL, of the Cambridgeshire light dragoons, was the officer who commanded the piquet guard on the night when the transaction, which had been so grossly and wickedly misrepresented, (*to* Lord Moira) occurred. He had been his first round with the *horse* piquet, and was out with *foot about eleven o'clock,* when, on going to the door of a house where there was a light and fire, the light was put out. The officer inquired of the people of the house for what pur-

which had existed in Ireland to the erroneous conduct of the British government; and proposed, as the grand remedy for all the distractions of the country, a system of, what he called, *conciliation*. Lord Clare proceeded to ask what security Lord Moira could give for the effects of such a system? He prophecied that it would be successful, but what pledge was there for the accomplishment of his presage?—Did he reason from the past?—The past was against him. If conciliation were a spell to allay clamours and discontent, in no place in the globe had it had so fair an experiment as in the kingdom of Ireland. The Chancellor called upon Lord Moira to meet

pose they had the light, and why they now extinguished it? A woman told him, that she had heard no lights were to be kept after nine or ten o'clock, and that her child was dangerously ill.---He immediately desired she would re-light her candle; informed her that no one would again call at her house; and, on his return to the piquet, gave the necessary orders to the serjeant and men, that she should not be disturbed. On passing the following morning, Lieutenant STEEL saw a woman at the door, and inquired after the child---she thanked him, but said she feared it could not recover.

"In his report to the commanding officer the next day, Lieutenant STEEL remarked, that he had not extinguished the lights, as the inhabitants wanted them for various purposes---watching their gardens, and the linen while bleaching, which they do alternately; also for the attendance on the sick, and the nursing of children."

him on this very ground—that, from the year 1779, to that very day, the system of the British Cabinet had been a system of conciliation to that country; and that no nation of Europe had, within the same time, advanced to equal prosperity with the kingdom of Ireland. In the year 1779, when Lord Moira was engaged in the discharge of an honourable duty in another part of the globe, (America) there were restraints upon the commerce of Ireland; Parliament addressed the Throne, and the British acts which operated to restrain Irish commerce were immediately repealed. And his Lordship, very opportunely, reminded the House, that the very persons who now professed themselves to be the most forward advocates of Irish emancipation, and were now in the practice of making Irish grievances a subject of continual debate in the British Parliament, expressed, in 1779, the most unqualified disapprobation of the measure proposed for relaxing the restraints which affected the Irish commerce;—and they were the very same men who were now the advocates of Irish traitors.

In a very short time after this concession, the voice of complaint was again heard; grievances were clamoured on every side; they were brought forward in Parliament by the leading patriots of the day, and a majority of the

House of Commons had the presumption to resist their demands. Then, for the first time, was an appeal made from Parliament to the armed majesty of the people; and every man who presumed to hesitate upon the subject in question was denounced as an enemy to his country, by that candid, impartial, and august tribunal. The British Cabinet, however, took steps to conciliate. The Duke of Portland, (who was then Viceroy) called upon the country to state what its grievances were. After such a step, some respite might have been expected;—the answer to his address was settled by the opposition cabinet of Ireland, so that the leaders of the popular cause were the very persons who settled what measures of conciliation would satisfy the country. That measure was restricted by them to a repeal of the usurped claim of the British Parliament, to bind Ireland by its acts, and a perpetual mutiny bill. The Duke of Portland promised for his Majesty that he would assent to their desires. Lord Clare declared he was justified in saying, that these grievances were brought forward by Opposition, as *the only matters of which the country could complain;* for not only were they stated in an amendment, moved to the address to the Throne, and agreed to by the House of Commons; but, in that amendment, the Oppo-

sition undertook to point out all the grievances of the country, and *pledged themselves that no future difficulty should arise between the two kingdoms;* and for this pledge the House of Commons voted the enormous sum of £50,000 to the gentleman (Mr. Grattan) who had taken on him the office of finding out those grievances, *as a reward for the final settlement of all dissentions.* These concessions were received with unbounded applause, and their authors were the idols of the nation for *about three weeks.*

This uncontradicted statement of the Chancellor's, exhibits, in the strongest point of view, the factious conduct of the Irish Opposition;—an Opposition, originating in the most sordid and selfish motives of mortified pride, thwarted ambition, and disappointed avarice; and conducted with a degree of virulence, and with a systematic pertinaciousness, which rendered the mask of patriotism, which was, as usual, assumed to disguise their real principles and objects, more odious and ridiculous. It appeared from this statement, that the Opposition themselves, at the period in question, declared every existing grievance to be removed, and in a manner pledged themselves, at least by direct implication, to remain satisfied with the concessions already made by the government, and to prefer no

further claims. Yet from that period to the present, with very short intervals of inactivity, have these same politicians continued to amuse themselves, and to disturb the country, with fresh claims, and with importunate demands for new concessions. So slender is the reliance to be placed in the declarations of *Patriots by profession;* and so little the advantage to be gained from hasty and inconsiderate concessions by a government.

Lord Clare proceeded to give a brief and succinct history of this system. He observed, that a gentleman of great political sagacity, meaning Mr. Flood, discovered the insufficiency of a repeal of the British Act, declaring the right of the British Legislature to bind Ireland, and that an express renunciation of the right itself was necessary. This instantly became the universal opinion, and the very men, who had three weeks before been the popular idols, were now the objects of obloquy and contempt, and exposed not only to insult, but to personal danger; to such a pitch of violence were the people driven by their political anger!—At the same time, nine hundred and ninety-nine out of one thousand, were utterly ignorant of the distinction between *simple repeal and renunciation;* and would, his lordship ventured to say, have been as easily led to vociferate against renuncia-

tion, as they were against simple repeal; and would have holden it as much in abhorrence, without knowing wherefore, had it answered the purposes of those who set them on. The experience of these facts, and the peril to which even their lives were exposed, ought, Lord Clare contended, to have taught these politicians the hazard of appealing to an armed multitude upon questions of abstract grievances.—The majesty of the people soon discovered another grievance; the army having been, of necessity, sent from Ireland, the Duke of Portland, from a principle of economy, raised four provincial regiments, officered by men who were to derive no military rank from their situation, and to be of no expence to the nation after the war. The name of *Fencibles* was new in the country, a clamour was raised against the establishment, and the Duke of Portland became as much an object of abuse as any other man with whom they chose to be offended. Had he raised four regiments of the line, and burthened the nation with an expensive half-pay list, nothing would have been said; but this act of economy was taken as a most outrageous insult upon an independent nation.

His Lordship then adverted to the first administration of Lord Buckingham, to the revived clamour respecting the necessity of an

absolute renunciation of all right of legislating for Ireland, on the part of Great Britain, and to the act which was passed for that purpose. Thus gratified in every wish, the patriots of Ireland might have suspended their labour, but this was not to happen;—they soon discovered that the Parliament, which had procured all these advantages, was in itself a grievance, and, being armed, they thought that the most constitutional mode of redressing grievances was to assemble, in a military convention, in the metropolis. Accordingly, in the year 1783, a military convention did meet in Dublin, decked in all the forms of a Parliament; they had their Speaker and their committees; a bill for the reform of the House of Commons was brought in, read, debated, read a second time, committed, reported, and ordered to be engrossed;—read a third time, passed, and sent, by two of their number, who happened to have seats in the House of Commons, to be registered by Parliament. It was declared at this time, by the Minister of the day, (Mr. Fox) now a leader of Opposition, as his opinion to Lord Northington, *that the existence of Ireland, as a member of the British empire, depended upon his dispersing that armed Convention.* Parliament, however, vindicated its honour; the bill thus brought in on the point of the bayonet was

indeed offered to the House of Commons; but the House treated this act of contumacious folly with the contempt which it deserved. It was driven from the House, and its authors, ashamed of their conduct, quietly shrunk back to their different counties.

In consequence of this firm conduct, Ireland remained quiet for about a year, before it was discovered that British manufactures, by their superior quality and cheapness, obtained a preference in the Irish market. Instead of setting about to rival them in quality or cheapness, or at all considering that the balance of trade, between Ireland and Great Britain, was infinitely in favour of the former, it was immediately resolved to commence a war of prohibitory duties against England, although it was proved, decisively, that there was not wool enough in Ireland to clothe one-half of its inhabitants. To conciliate and quiet these claims, Great Britain, in 1785, offered a fair and liberal commercial treaty to Ireland, by which she admitted the Irish to her markets, and shared her immense capital with them, and opened her colonies to their trade, on condition that they should follow England in the laws which she had made for the regulation of those colonies, and of that trade in which they were to participate. This, however, was represented, by

the sensitive patriots of the soil, as a new attack upon Irish independence, and, so great was the outcry raised against it, that the Parliament of Ireland, in their wisdom, thought fit to reject the treaty, and, duped by the silliest deception that ever was practised on any set of men, lost an opportunity of consolidating the interests of the Empire. There was now some respite from political agitation for two or three years, and his Lordship called upon every man who heard him to say, whether the kingdom did not, during that period, advance in prosperity to a degree till then unexampled.

At the period of the regency Lord Clare remarked, that the Parliament of Ireland, influenced by the same persons who had supported all these clamours, acted with the most marked hostility towards the British Parliament; and he declared his opinion, that the rash, intemperate, and *illegal*, conduct of that period, on the question of the regency, shook the Constitution to its foundation, and was the primary cause of every subsequent disaster.

The persons who had, on that occasion, signed the memorable *Round Robin*, and had afterwards been dismissed from office, combining with the old demagogues, formed themselves into a political club for the redress of

grievances. They began by a Manifesto, charging the British government with a systematic design to destroy the liberty of Ireland; and they proclaimed that the basis of their institution was a resolution to maintain, with their lives and fortunes, the Constitution as settled at the Revolution of 1688, and re-asserted in Ireland in 1782. The leading objects of reform, which these Tavern-Legislators deemed necessary for the salvation of the country, were the appointment of three Commissioners of the Revenue; the separation of the Board of Accounts from that of Stamps; a Pension Bill; and a Responsibility Bill. Lord Clare proved the absurdity of these proposed regulations; and observed that, if the Pension Bill had passed, an appropriated sum of £80,000 a year would have been given, absolutely, to the Crown, when no other part of the revenue was appropriated, and the Responsibility Bill went to establish, in Ireland, an Executive Directory of five officers independent of the Crown.

The debates which these measures produced in Parliament were carried on with so much coarse, intemperate, foul, and useless, invective, the parties charging each other so familiarly with faction and corruption, that the people gave both sides credit, full credit

for the villainous charges exhibited against each other;* and, with minds poisoned by the clamours of this political club, and inflamed by their calumnies into hatred of the British name, were ready to become the instruments of every political club which would incite them by the same kind of clamours, and, accordingly, very readily disposed to follow the pestilent society of United Irishmen. That pestilent association, which had reduced Ireland to a state of cannibal barbarism, little short of the horrors of 1641, began its career, as the Whig Club had done, by a Manifesto, not against any Administration, but against the British name; not to counteract the existing Minister, to favour the Administration of the Duke of Portland, of Lord Lansdowne, of Mr. Fox, or of Lord Moira himself, should he get into power, but to rouse up the indignation of Ireland against the British connection, and against British power, under any shape which it might possibly assume. Lord Clare referred to a confidential dispatch from the founder of

* *Speech of the Right Honourable John, Earl of Clare, Lord High Chancellor of Ireland, in the House of Lords, in Ireland, Monday, February* 19, 1798, *on a motion made by the Earl of Moira, for an Address to the Viceroy, to adopt conciliatory manners for allaying apprehension and discontent. Dublin printed, London re-printed,* 1798, p. 10.

this society, then on the continent, to his friends at Belfast, in which the design of the association was avowed to be the separation of Ireland from England, by French assistance. A circumstance was mentioned by his Lordship, which placed the pusillanimity of the Irish government in a very disgraceful point of view;—a nest of conspirators was suffered to continue in Dublin, and, notwithstanding his repeated remonstrances, their sittings had continued nearly three years before the magistrates *were suffered* to disperse them.* At length, however, government became sensible of the danger, and, by a due exertion of authority, put a stop to the attempt.

It appeared, from the report of the Secret Committee of the Irish Lords, in 1793, which, on the motion of Lord Clare, had been read, that no pains were left unemployed for the seduction of the troops, and that a gentleman,

* If these assemblies were illegal, as the Chancellor seems to have had no doubt they were, it was the duty of the magistrates to disperse them, nor could they, consistently with their oaths, have allowed any interposition of superior authority to deter them from the discharge of that duty. And, on the other hand, if the government really interposed its authority for such a purpose, the Ministers were highly culpable, and deserved to be impeached, for interrupting the due course of justice.

of rank, honour, respectability, and worth, who was a colonel in the army, had been applied to, so early as the year 1792, to accept a commission in the Revolutionary Army.—The persons who applied to him observed, that they had a sufficiency of men, arms, and money, but that they wanted officers of experience to discipline them. His Lordship then adverted to the means adopted for separating the body of the Catholics from their own gentry and nobility; their abuse of the late Lord Kenmare, for presuming to recommend the observance of a legal and peaceable conduct; and the consequent establishment of an Executive Committee, some of whom were, at this time, members of the Irish Directory, and connected with their brethren in France. In order to furnish themselves with arms, with more expedition, and at a cheaper rate, they set the Catholics upon the scheme of robbing the Protestants of their arms; and they held correspondence, through their Secretary, with men about to be tried for breaking open houses and taking arms; and all this passed long before any one of the laws of which these persons affected to complain, and to which Lord Moira seemed to attribute their excesses, was enacted.

Lord Clare took a view of the gunpowder and convention acts, which had been so strongly

reprobated by the Opposition; shewed to what they were indebted for their origin; and what evils they were meant to suppress;—clearly demonstrating, that, so far from having been the cause, of the conspiracy, they arose from the incontrovertible proof of its existence and acts, previous to their having been enacted. These laws, however, proved inadequate to prevent the secret machinations of these domestic traitors, who converted those counties, in which their influence was best established, into a scene of murder and robbery: no loyal, peaceful man could sit securely by his fire-side; the first salute, or notice, which he received of the attack upon his house was usually a volley of musquetry about his ears, fired in through his windows; and if this failed to drive him out of his house, it was customary to set fire to the house, that he might be forced out for assassination. In order to restrain these outrages, an act was passed, in 1796, by which government was enabled, if the majority of the magistrates of a county should require it, to declare any district, represented by them as in a state of disturbance, out of the King's peace, and to establish, in such district, a sort of military government. By that law, the taking of unlawful oaths was made a transportable felony, and the tendering of them a capital crime; for the

means by which the union had acted, and continued to act, was by an oath to keep secrecy, and to obey the commands of their leaders.

This law was not carried into effect for a considerable time; it was first enforced, in the county of Armagh, without regard to persons or party; and it would soon have succeeded in restoring tranquillity, but for the approaching period of a general election. The magistrates of the county, for election purposes, ranged themselves under the different parties of Orangemen and defenders; and the Chancellor declared, that, if he could have procured a sufficient number of gentlemen of that county to execute the office of magistrate, who had not taken one part or the other, he would have issued a new commission of the peace for the county of Armagh, omitting every one of the existing magistrates; but, unfortunately, he could not procure them.

Lord Clare proceeded to state the constitution of the United Irishmen, in order to prove the impracticability to counteract their projects, by the means of ordinary laws. The lower, or primary, societies consisting of the lower class of society, were formed into clubs of not more than thirty each; when they amounted to that number they divided into new societies, which,

in their cant, were *organized*, and provided with the necessary officers; when the number of these societies in a barony became sufficient for the purpose, a society was elected from amongst them, to preside over the affairs of the barony, and to be the channel of communication between the primary societies and their superiors. From the baronial committees, when amounting to a sufficient number, were formed county committees, which, in the same manner, produced provincial committees, immediately connected with their Executive Directory, and with the lowest societies of THE UNION. By this sort of system, the Executive Directory of the Union governed its operations with more vigour than even the ability of Lord Moira could diffuse through the most regular army which he ever had under his command. The communications were made through their respective Secretaries, either verbally, or by detached papers, which, when they were fully understood, were so immediately cancelled, that it was wonderful that so many of them should have been discovered. In this way the commands of the Executive Directory were communicated through the provincial, county, and baronial, secretaries, to the lowest ranks of this pestilent UNION. When there was such an invisible power, operating by invisible means, how was a regular

government to oppose, by the slow formalities of municipal law, the promptness of such an enemy; a promptness which no government had hitherto been found to attain.

The Chancellor asked Lord Moira, when he talked of conciliation, *whom* they were to conciliate? Was it the Revolutionary Government, the Executive Directory, of Ireland, which held as regular a correspondence with France as the Lord Lieutenant did with England? "I will tell the Noble Earl,"—said his Lordship,—"that they are not to be conciliated; that they would no more treat with the noble Earl than they would with me; that they consider themselves secure of French aid, and of the support of the lower orders, whom they have seduced by the hope of plunder, and the promise of an Agrarian distribution of the land. Does the noble Earl know to what frenzy this Union has carried the greater part of the lower order; that they have taken an oath of secrecy, which, to violate, is certain death, that they are bound to obey the orders of their governors, even to the assassination of their dearest friend or most beloved companion, that, by their unrelenting barbarity, they have spread universal horror and dismay through the country; that every witness who has dared to appear against them has been written down in *the book of death*; that magistrates have been

murdered; that, even in the courts of justice, jurymen have been threatened with the fate of these witnesses and magistrates, and desired to look to them as to their own lot, should they dare to punish a member of the UNION."—In the preceding summer, a circular hand-bill had been published, and sent through the North of Ireland, cautioning juries not to convict a *brother;* and the general sentiment promulgated, by their committee, was, that no crime committed to forward the objects of the Union was blameable; nay, that every such act was pardonable in the eyes of God and man.

Lord Clare then read the plan of the Union, as drawn up by its founder, Tone; which he justly compared with the German Union, described by Professor Robison; and observed, that, if the principle of a school might be fairly gathered from the sentiments of the teacher, the design of the Irish UNION might be fully collected from the avowed sentiments of Mr. Tone, who had again and again acknowledged it to be separation from England, and the establishment of an Irish Republic connected with France. To accomplish that laudable purpose, had witnesses, magistrates, and jurors, been murdered, the rabble armed, pikes made and distributed, barbarities committed, at which even France might blush, and attempts made to cor-

rupt the King's troops to desert their colours, and rob their Sovereign; public justice had been eluded, insulted, and trampled upon, and a power established paramount to the law. Lord Clare expressed his regret that Lord Moira had not resided in the country, and formed his opinions from his own observations, for, if he had, he would willingly leave the decision to his acknowledged honour and integrity. He related the case of Dr. Hamilton, a clergyman of the Established Church, who was obliged, for several months, to have his house, in the North of Ireland, garrisoned against the Insurgents. This gentleman, who was a man of amiable manners and exemplary humanity, having been unhappily delayed at a ferry which lay in his way home, and having gone to the neighbouring house of an old college friend, Dr. Waller, was watched and marked for murder by these barbarians. While he sate round the fire with his host, a volley of musquetry was fired into the windows, which laid Mrs. Waller dead at her husband's feet;—the terrified servants were forced, for self-preservation, to give up their unhappy guest to the fury of the brotherhood; and that worthy gentleman was mangled and slaughtered, with circumstances of cruelty too horrible even for Indian savages to hear.—And yet these were men to be conciliated by fair words and soothing promises;—these were the

injured innocents whose fine feelings were tempered to conciliation? Lord Moira was asked if he had heard of the murder of Dr. Knipe, who was murdered within twenty miles of the capital;—of Mr. Comyn, butchered within a few miles of his own seat at Ballinahinch, for the crime of having enrolled himself for the defence of his country, and having dared to accept a commission under his King. Had he heard of Mr. Butler's assassination, another Protestant clergyman, murdered by the UNION? Had he read the dark and bloody catalogue of murder, which was a disgrace to the country; and would he contend that, while an invisible power of darkness was dealing destruction round the country, government was to rest upon its arms, and temporize with treason until the massacre was completed?—Lord Clare told Lord Moira he would supply him with some materials for the formation of a correct opinion on the state of the country. Mr. Conolly, who spent a large fortune in the country; who, at his house of Castletown, lived in a state of hospitality, by which hundreds were supported, discovered, in the summer of 1797, a conspiracy within the walls of his own house, to murder him and his amiable lady;—a lady whose whole life had been devoted to the service of her fellow-crea-

tures, whose humanity and charity had been incessant in their activity, who was the mother, the patroness, the benefactress, of the whole country around her; whose virtues were as far above praise as they were universal in their exercise;—yet even she was to fall before the fury of the Union. Her husband, who had toiled through a long and honourable life for the advantage of his country, was to be murdered along with her, and their house delivered up to a band of ruffians. This was to be done by the very wretches who lived upon their bounty, who were so abandoned to the purposes of the Union as not to shrink even from the murder of their friend and their benefactress. Lord Clare stated that he paid a visit at Castletown soon after, when he found that hospitable mansion in a state of regular fortification. After sun-set, the doors were all barred and chained, and a *chevaux de frise* was planted round them, and a regular guard of soldiers was mounted in the house. And yet, with all this precaution, Lady Louisa assured his Lordship, that she was afraid to suffer him, or any one else, to sleep on the ground floor. After this statement, Lord Moira was, very appositely, asked, whether he expected the gentlemen of Ireland would tamely lie down and hold out their necks to the knife of the assassins, and

give up their families, their property, their country, without an effort for their preservation?

Having pursued this line of argument for some time, and having proved, by the instructions to General Lake, that government, even when forced, for self-preservation, to have recourse to coercive measures, had acted with all the lenity and forbearance which the circumstances of the case would allow;—and having, consequently, demonstrated the injustice of Lord Moira's accusations, he informed his Lordship, that his own town of Ballinahinch was *one of the rankest citadels of treason in the kingdom.* Lord Moira had informed the House, that he had assembled the people of that town, and, after he had unfolded to them the mischiefs of republicanism, the virtues of the King, and the good qualities of the Heir-Apparent; he read their loyalty in their eyes, and it was expressed, without a possibility of deception, in their countenances. Lord Clare, however, referred him to the trials of some privates of the Monaghan militia, where he would find that these unfortunate men were first seduced, and sworn by one of his own tenants, in that town of Ballinahinch; that, as an inducement to them to desert their colours, and to steal their arms, commissions were given them, in that town of Balli-

nahinch, for the Revolutionary army;—facts proved by the solemn confession of the soldiers themselves, at the moment of their execution. That very town of Ballinahinch was summoned, by General Lake, to give up its arms;—the people refused, and it was not until they were threatened with a military force, that they did give them up; and, amongst other things, no inconsiderable quantity of pikes! "Are pikes," said Lord Clare, "arguments for reform? are pikes the emblems of loyalty to the Heir Apparent?" Lord Moira was further reminded, that his own groom and gardener, in that very town, acknowledged themselves members of the Union, and admitted that pike-handles had been concealed in his Lordship's own timber-yard, where his Lordship's own agent found traces of them. But as Lord Moira had asserted that the loyalty of Ballinahinch had been impeached only by the evidence of one man, of the name of Morgan, it was found necessary to state to the House, that this Morgan had been afterwards sent to Downpatrick for security; but, that having unfortunately ventured to quit that place, he was murdered by a party of horsemen; and that, it was ascertained, a party of men on horseback had, about that time, left the town of Ballinahinch. Within two months of this very time, the people of that town had

made two centinels drunk, and then stole from them upwards of a hundred ball-cartridges.—Such was the loyal town of Ballinahinch. Several other inaccuracies, into which Lord Moira had been betrayed by misinformation, were corrected by Lord Clare; who then put it fairly to his Lordship, whether there was not a rebellion in the country of a most desperate nature, and having a most treasonable object?—If rebellion were to be met by the slow operation of law, it was truly observed, there would soon be no law at all. This observation was made for the purpose of contrasting Lord Moira's past practice with his present theory. In the year 1781, in America, then in a state of rebellion, Isaac Haynes, an American Colonel, was taken by a patrole, and, being identified as a man who had taken the oath of allegiance, he was hanged, without further ceremony, on a charge of having attempted to corrupt the troops, by terrifying the timid and seducing the weak* And the defence made for this sum-

* The execution of Colonel Haynes (which took place at Charles-Town, South Carolina, in the summer of 1781) was brought before the House of Lords, by the Duke of Richmond, (a member of the Opposition of that day) on the fourth of February, 1782. It was then stated, on the authority of a private letter, that Lord Rawdon, and Lieutenant-Colonel Balfour, had resolved upon his execution, for having been

mary mode of punishment was, that, during the existence of an actual rebellion, to wait for the forms of law was to yield to the rebels.

What was the charge preferred against Lord Camden? That, during a rebellion in the country, the rebels having endeavoured to corrupt the King's troops, to seduce the weak, and to terrify the timid, having manufactured

found under arms, and employed in raising a regiment to oppose the British government, though he had become a subject, and had accepted the protection of that government, after the reduction of Charles-Town. The Duke of Richmond stigmatized this proceeding, as *illegal*, *barbarous*, and *impolitic*.--- It was defended, however, by the Lord Chancellor, as strictly legal; his Lordship maintained, that Colonel Haynes, having been taken in arms, after admission to his parole, was liable to be hanged up *instanter*, without any other form of trial than what was necessary to identify his person, and the House concurred in the justice of this opinion. When Lord Rawdon, however, returned to England, he felt so much offended at having such harsh terms applied to his conduct, (which was, unquestionably, regular, legal, and proper,) that he demanded satisfaction of the Nobleman who used them, in a very peremptory manner; nor was he satisfied, until he had received the most ample apology, which he could, himself, dictate. Yet to conduct, at least, *as* legal, *as* regular, and *as* necessary, on the part of the Irish government and army, did his Lordship, at this period, not scruple to apply terms still more severe, more harsh, more unjust, and more unwarrantable. Into such inconsistencies does the spirit of party betray mankind!

pikes, stolen arms, murdered magistrates; and affrighted the country, avowing their design of waiting for foreign aid, to overthrow the Constitution, and renounce all allegiance, they were, by the order of Lord Camden, disarmed and deprived of the power of offending against the laws and peace of the country, that he might be spared the painful necessity of hanging them, like Colonel Haynes, without any form of trial.

Lord Clare stated that, in consequence of the vigorous measures of the government, and the firm conduct of General Lake, the country was fast returning to peace and comfort.—Industry began to re-appear, and manufactures to flourish; until Lord Moira made his unfortunate speech in the British Parliament, and avowed his design of going to Ireland. As soon as this was announced, the broken spirits of the Union revived, an association was formed for the collection of grievances, a call was published to all manner of persons,—"Come unto me, all ye that are heavy laden, and disburthen your grievances to us." This was the signal for new disturbances, and it had, unhappily, been too successful!

A report having been circulated of a probable change of Ministers, the leaders of the Union thought that a favourable opportunity

for promoting their designs. A requisition was, accordingly, addressed to the Sheriff for the County of Down, desiring him to call a meeting of all the inhabitants of that *proclaimed* and *rebellious* district. And this requisition was even signed by some of the very Magistrates who had called upon the Viceroy to proclaim the county to be out of the King's peace. This illegal act, however, the Magistrates took care to prevent. But a petition was, nevertheless, carried about for signatures, and the first name subscribed to it was that of a Protestant Bishop, who did not scruple to hawk round the county a paper intended to carry a *positive falsehood* to the foot of the Throne.

In that paper it was asserted, that, in consequence of the war, the manufactures of Ireland had been destroyed; that, by a war which had laid waste the German Empire, the demand for Irish Linen had been diminished. In opposition to this assertion, the Chancellor stated, from authority, that the average of linen exported for four years, immediately preceding the war, was NINE millions four hundred thousand pounds in value; and the average for the first four years of the war was ELEVEN millions two hundred thousand pounds; so that the country which was so confidently affirmed to be ruined in its manufactures by the war, had

absolutely gained to the amount of near TWO millions upon the average. In the year 1796, THREE millions were exported,— a greater export than had ever been known since the first establishment of the manufacture. But the secret of the mistake was simply this;— the party in England had made the same complaint, and it was necessary for their friends in Ireland to follow them, right or wrong. In the year 1797 (a great portion of which had passed since the petition in question) there was a great decrease, indeed, of the Linen trade; but the petitioners neglected to state the true reason of it. They did not state that the northern weaver had given up the shuttle for the pike; that they had abandoned their sober habits of industry and religion for midnight outrage and traitorous associations; and that they had degenerated from manufacturers into murderers.— These were the means by which the manufactures, the comforts, and the tranquillity of the country, had been destroyed.

In answer to the assertion, that the trade of Belfast had been reduced to *one-fifteenth*, it was proved, by the returns of the Customs, that the only reduction which it had experienced, was from £92,000 to £85,000! And, it appeared, that, so far from the war having injured the trade of Ireland, Ireland was the

only country, in Europe, which had profited by the war. In the Southern parts of Ireland, where the people had long remained loyal, and where, in consequence, tranquillity had not been interrupted, industry flourished, and trade prospered.—But this happiness was not suffered to be of long duration, for when the French had attempted to invade the country in 1796 they found such a disposition to resist them that, on their return, they reproached Mr. Tone with the deception which he had practised upon them, in the assurance that the whole country would rise at their approach, and hasten to join their standard. Tone promised to correct this mistake; he, accordingly, sent a strong remonstrance to the leaders of the Union, on the necessity of immediately *organizing* the South; and they succeeded but too well in their efforts for the accomplishment of this diabolical purpose."

A petition for a change of Ministers had been circulated in the County of Kildare, and the name of a lame Mendicant was one of the first affixed to it. A Peer had passed a whole day in procuring signatures in the little town of Leixlip, and devoted two hours to shake the obstinacy of a Blacksmith, his apprentice, journeyman, and labourer, and to add their names to the list. It was truly remarked, by the

Chancellor, that it was hardly possible that the country should be otherwise than disturbed, when disturbances were encouraged by such paltry artifices in men of rank, who used those means to force one set of men into, and another set of men out of, the Cabinet of Great Britain.

But, a few days previous to this debate, in the Irish Parliament, the following order, of the Executive Directory of the UNION, was issued.—"United Irishmen, your numbers are now so much increased, that you may justly be called the people; but your organization must increase with your numbers, for, without it, how can your strength be brought to act?—Consider what a time this is; when France has, after overcoming all the powers of Europe, marched all her troops to her coasts for the invasion of Great Britain and Ireland, to meet men arrayed in the cause of liberty, and anxious to receive them. Great Britain, falling into bankruptcy and ruin; this is the moment for you to exert yourselves; unite and organize, and, ere long, you must be free." And this order was immediately followed by another, enjoining the Union to meet in bodies of not more than five or six, to wear no particular uniform, to wait in confidence for the time when they would

receive assistance from the armies of France, and they must succeed.

Before he concluded his luminous sketch of the passing times, the Chancellor noticed a new revolutionary engine, to which the Irish Insurgents had lately had recourse. When it was found that the protection afforded to the witnesses, magistrates, and jurors, ensured, and established, the operation of the laws, a scheme was devised to abuse the administration of justice.* Every man concerned in that administration was held up as the most corrupt, tyrannical, and profligate, of characters; the truth was perverted, the most scandalous misrepresentations were made of the conduct of the Courts, and the whole force of the Union was bent to propagate these falsehoods. This was most flagrantly the case with respect to William Orr, one of the most active Members of the Union, who was executed at Carrickfergus, on the 14th of October, 1797.† This man was indicted for endeavouring to seduce two sol-

* This scheme was first carried into execution in the English Parliament, where the Members of the Opposition did not blush to revile the Judges of Scotland, for presuming to convict and punish persons guilty of treasonable and seditious practices, in conformity with the laws of the country.

† His brother, Samuel Orr, was afterwards hanged as a Rebel.

diers from their duty and allegiance; the names of the men, Wheatly and Lindsey, had been found in a list of the *Union*, seized upon a Committee in the act of sitting. The men were apprehended; they confessed the crime, and each of them, distinctly, and separately, charged Orr as the Secretary of the meeting at which they were sworn. They named several persons who were present, not one of whom was brought to disprove their allegations; and, although a witness was brought to impeach the credit of Wheatly, his evidence was of such an incredible nature, that the Judge did not think it necessary to take it down in his note-book. No attempt was made to discredit the other witness, and Orr was found guilty by a Jury, who, at the same time, though repeatedly cautioned to re-consider their verdict, recommended him to mercy. A motion was made in arrest of judgment. An account of the Trial was printed, which, to the disgrace of the profession, Lord Clare said, mutilated and garbled as it was, was obviously produced under the inspection of a Barrister. By that account of the motion in arrest of judgment, the country was given to understand, that Orr was tried under a Statute which had expired, although there were several other counts in the indictment, had it been possible to suppose that the

insurrection act was not in force. The motion was overruled, and, after it had been so disposed of, a counsel, who wore the King's gown, went into court, and exhibited an affidavit, in which it was stated that the jury were drunk. And, when asked why he did this, he answered, that his object was to move for an attachment against the jury;—but the real object of its introduction, said the Chancellor, was to slander the administration of justice, and for no other purpose. The noble and learned judge, as was his duty, transmitted the recommendation of the jury to government;—but, when asked if he concurred in it, he declared that he could not.

Affidavits were then made and transmitted to the Viceroy to impeach the conduct of the jury; but although the report alluded to contained an account of an affidavit tending to discredit the witness, *it is most certain that no such affidavit was ever laid* before the Lord Lieutenant. Upon such grounds as these the execution of this rebel had been held out as a murder, and, at a drunken meeting at a tavern in London, a member of the English Parliament was said to have given, as a toast, "The memory of William Orr, basely murdered;" and, it was also said, that another worthy gentleman, with equal zeal and delicacy, at the same

meeting, gave, as a bumper toast, "May the Lord Lieutenant, and the Irish Cabinet, be seen in the situation of William Orr."—The object of all this was very plain; if the sources of public justice were thus poisoned, its administration would soon become impracticable. Lord Clare adverted to the profligate speech of an Irish barrister, who, he said, deserved the pillory, in which he had the audacity to support this same calumny, and to utter a foul libel on public justice, in its very sanctuary.

The Chancellor observed, that, besides the test and supremacy acts, there was but one statute which affected the Roman Catholics, as such; that was the act which rendered a certain portion of property a necessary qualification for the keeping of arms. It was needless to dwell on the fundamental importance to the constitution of the test and supremacy laws, which extended alike to all his Majesty's subjects, or to explain how the country had flourished under their influence. The Chancellor requested Lord Moira, when he returned to England, to rise in the British House of Peers, and move for a repeal of those laws. He was afraid, however, he would not comply, and for this reason:—He would be told that, for an attempt of the very same kind, James the Second was expelled from the Throne of England;—he would be told,

that he was about to condemn the principles of the revolution, and to impeach the title of the House of Hanover. For, could any man say, that, if it were right to repeal the test and supremacy laws, James the Second, who was expelled for that attempt, was not worse used than any other Prince that ever lived.* In the memorable declaration of James, which hurled him from the Throne, would be found no very dissimilar model of the test of the Irish Union. In that declaration, the Monarch avowed, that he had brought Papists into his Privy Council for the purpose of promoting a brotherhood of affection, and a conciliation of religious differences; and it was asked, if that declaration had not been made, would the House of Hanover have now sat on the Throne of these kingdoms?

Lord Moira was called upon to disclose his panacea, his nostrum, which was to conciliate men who had broken the pledges which they had formerly given, and to ensure their fidelity; and, by the aid of which a Protestant Church was to stand against a Roman Catholic State; and the British Constitution against a Republican Democracy.—What was the principle of the British Constitution?—that the Church and

* Lord Clare's speech, p. 42.

State are united, and that he who attempts to separate them will shake the whole fabric. And this was well known to the UNION; the members of which saw that the altar was a main pillar of the Throne; they, therefore, devised the scheme of reviving religious disputes, and, if they could succeed in exciting animosities, they perceived that they would accomplish their purpose. Another principle of the Constitution was, that no man should exercise any of the powers of the State, who should not give a solemn proof of his allegiance to that Constitution, in Church and State, a precaution absolutely necessary to its conservation. "I know," said the Chancellor, "that amongst the Catholics are many worthy, good, and loyal men; but I know that they are so because they have not political power;—I know that it is impossible for a man to be a good Catholic without doing every thing to forward the interests of his Church; and I know that, to that purpose he must employ the power which he might obtain in a Protestant State. Let me remind your Lordships, that this is no obsolete doctrine; that it is the basis of the present titular Bishop of Waterford's celebrated letter; that it is to be found in another letter, of another Bishop of that Church, as strongly recommended, though less incautiously expressed. I know that the moderate Catholics were dis-

pleased at the violence of Doctor Hussey; but I also know, it was his *expression*, and not his *doctrine*, of which they disapprove."

It was observed, by Lord Clare, that the act of supremacy stood in the way of the notable scheme proposed by Lord Moira; that act which connected the spiritual power of the Church of Ireland with the Crown of Great Britain. Would Lord Moira venture to address his Majesty to repeal a law which it was a question whether the King could even assent to repeal? These were difficult constitutional questions, not to be decided by the arguments of pikes, of cannons, and howitzers. The Chancellor concluded his able speech with beseeching Lord Moira, when he saw the condition to which the country had been reduced by the artifices of party, on his return to England,—as he valued the peace and happiness of Ireland,—to use his influence with the politicians of Great Britain, to dissuade them from continuing to play the game of party politics in that unfortunate country. "The noble Earl does not know the people of Ireland so well as I do; he does not know that there is not so volatile or credulous a people on the earth; that they are ready to be the dupes of any projector who will only profess good will towards them; that they will not hesitate if any man comes with a book in one

hand, and a declaration in the other, to take his test, provided it professes to be for their advantage. If he knew this, he would be less surprised at the melancholy influence which words and parties have with them, and he would be more anxious, than he is, to prevent the increase of so mischievous a practice." Earl Moira's motion was negatived, on a division, by *thirty-five* to *ten*.

From this speech of Lord Clare's, a better estimate may be formed of the state of Ireland, the disposition of the people, and the cause of the dreadful disturbances which threatened the destruction of every thing which renders a country desirable, than from any other document, the reports of the Parliamentary Committees, perhaps, only excepted. The opportunities which he enjoyed for acquiring correct information; the known integrity of his character; and the high and important station which he filled, all combined to secure his testimony against those suspicions which generally attach to the evidence of partisans. The most implicit belief, therefore, may be safely given to all his statements, respecting the views and proceedings of the rebels, and the conduct of the government. Indeed, within three weeks of this discussion, on the first of February, a Provincial Committee of the rebels was holden

at Shane's-Castle, at which it was declared, "that three delegates had arrived from France; that the French expedition was going forward, and was soon expected; that three delegates had been sent from the United Britons to the National Committee, and that, from that moment, they were to consider England, Scotland, and Ireland, all as one people, acting for one common cause;—that there were legislators now chosen from the three kingdoms, to act as an executive for the whole; that they were now sure of obtaining liberty though the French should never come;—that the delegates should cause the men to hold themselves in readiness, as the hour of action could not be far distant; and that they should collect the names of all their friends, and their places of residence."* This was done, and numbers of loyal men were pointed out for assassination, in two papers, devoted to the rebels, the *Press*, the property of Arthur O'Connor, and the *Union Star*.†

* Report of the Secret Committee, Appendix, p. 111.

† The following short extracts from this detestable paper, which, to the disgrace of government, was long published with impunity, will suffice to demonstrate the justice of this assertion, and to prove the extreme audacity and confidence of the rebels at this period.

"He here offers to public justice the following detestable traitors, as spies and perjured informers. Perhaps some arm,

Only two days before Lord Moira made his motion, a paper, containing this notice, was found stuck upon the walls of St. Mary's Church, Dublin, "Liberty! Erin go bragh!—You Protestant heretics! Take notice, that mass will commence in this Church by the first of May next; your blood shall flow, and your souls shall be sent to the devil, your grandfather."* Although Lord Moira had exerted every effort to obtain, and performed every act to deserve, popularity, in the county of Down, where his estate was situated, yet, at a county meeting of United Irishmen, held at Saintfield, on the fourth of February, 1798, the following passage appeared in the minutes of their proceedings. "Nothing particular was done, except that Earl Moira's character was discussed

more lucky than the rest, may reach his heart, and free the world from bondage." Here followed the list of the proscribed persons---a description of their persons, and every possible incitement and direction to assassination. Again, "Let the indignation of man be raised against the impious wretch, who profanely assumes the title of reigning by the grace of God, and impudently tells the world he can do no wrong." The King is then called "an impious blasphemer;" told that his fate is inevitable; that "the first professor of his trade has recently bled for the crimes of the craft;" and that his throne is tottering.

* Sir R. Musgrave's Memoirs, p. 198.

at full length, to know whether he was a man that could be depended on, or not, by the people? It was agreed that he was as great a tyrant as the Lord Lieutenant, and a deeper designing one."* And, on the very day on which Lord Moira's proposal for the adoption of conciliatory measures was submitted to the House of Peers, the Provincial Committees of rebels, both of Ulster and of Leinster, the one sitting at Armagh, the other in Dublin, adopted this resolution:—"That we will give no attention whatever to any attempt made by either House of Parliament, to divert the public mind from the grand object we have in view, as nothing short of complete emancipation of our country will satisfy us."

But, notwithstanding the bold front which Rebellion thus displayed, as it were, in the face of day, bidding defiance to Government, and relying on the success of their traitorous schemes, Sir Lawrence Parsons proposed, in the House of Commons, on the fifth of March, the same plan of conciliation and concession which the House of Peers had so recently rejected. The arguments by which he attempted to support it were the same as those used by

* Report of the Secret Committee, Appendix, No. XIV, p. 115.

Lord Moira, and they experienced the same fate, for his motion was negatived by *one hundred and fifty-six* to *nineteen*.

Every thing was now ripe for that explosion which the Government had so long expected to take place, and its dreadful precursors, outrage and murder, proclaimed its near approach. The whole diabolical plan was formed with systematic precision; the French model had been so far followed, that no mean scruples of delicacy, no unmanly feelings of remorse, were suffered to interpose the slightest obstacle to the full accomplishment of the murderous project. All the Members of the Government, and the major part of the two Houses of Parliament, with all those loyal persons who had displayed their zeal, in defence of the establishment in Church and State, were included in the bloody roll of proscription. It was wished, however, to obtain the assistance of a French force, before the signal of massacre was given, and Arthur O'Connor, and the Priest, O'Coigley, had been dispatched to France for that purpose. But the vigilance of the British Government interrupted their mission; they were apprehended on the road; the Priest met the fate he deserved on the gallows; and his companion was kept in confinement, and afterwards sent a prisoner to Ireland.

Two of the leaders of the Belfast rebels, Hughes and Neilson, were in Dublin, in the month of April, to concert measures for the grand attack. Hughes afterwards declared, that he accompanied Neilson, on the 28th of April, to the house of Mr. Grattan, at Tinnehinch, that Mr. Grattan having learned from himself, that he was an *United Irishman*, questioned him much about the state of the North, and the number of houses burned there by *the government* or the *Orange Men*. Mr. Grattan also enquired how many United Irishmen, and how many Orange men, there were, in his province; and he was told by Hughes, that he supposed about 126,000 of the former, and about 12,000 of the latter. In Mr. Grattan's library was a printed Constitution of the United Irishmen, respecting which Mr. Grattan asked Hughes various questions. Neilson had a private conference with Mr. Grattan, and, on taking leave, Mr. Grattan told Neilson, in the presence of Hughes, that he would be in town on, or before, the Tuesday following. Neilson, himself, admitted, that he had two interviews with Mr. Grattan, at Tinnehinch, in the month of April, and that he either shewed Mr. Grattan the Constitution of the United Irishmen, or explained it to him, "*and pressed him to come*

*forward."** It is evident, if these men spoke truth, and no attempt, it is believed, has been made to impeach their veracity, that Mr. Grattan's zeal had, in this instance, transported him far, very far, beyond the bounds of discretion, and had brought him near, very near, to the confines of treason.

" *Misprision of treason,*" says one of the commentators on the Laws of England, " consists in *the bare knowledge and concealment of treason,* without any degree of assent thereto, for any assent makes the party a principal traitor, as, indeed, the concealment, which was construed aiding and abetting, did, at the common law, in like manner as the knowledge of a plot against the State, and not revealing it, was a capital crime in Florence, and other states of Italy. But it is now enacted, by the Statute 1 and 2. Ph. and Mar. c. 10, that a bare concealment of treason shall be only held a misprision. *This concealment becomes criminal, if the party apprized of the treason does not, as soon as conveniently may be, reveal it to some Judge of Assize, or Justice of the Peace.* But if there be any probable circumstances of assent, as if one goes to a treasonable meeting, knowing, before-

* Report from the Committee of Secrecy of the House of Lords,-August 30, 1798.

hand, that a conspiracy is intended against the King; or, being in such company once by accident, and having heard such treasonable conspiracy, meets the same company again, and hears more of it, but conceals it;—this is an implied assent in law, and makes the concealer guilty of actual high treason.*

If this exposition of the law be applied to the facts divulged by Neilson and Hughes, it is impossible not to draw the conclusion, that it was the imperative duty of the Government to render this matter the subject of a legal investigation. The charge was clear and positive; it was solemnly advanced before a Committee of the House of Peers, in the presence of the Lord High Chancellor of the Realm; and, unless the Government totally discredited the testimony of the witnesses, (who, be it observed, could not, at that period, have had the smallest interest to deceive them,) they betrayed not only a pusillanimous spirit, but a culpable neglect of their duty, in not carrying it before a proper tribunal. Indeed, justice to the party accused required the institution of a legal inquiry, in order that his innocence, if the charge were really unfounded, might be established in the most public, and the most

* Blackstone's Commentaries, Vol. IV, p. 120.

satisfactory, manner, and on the most solid grounds. As it is, the unprejudiced voice of posterity must be left to pronounce judgment on the facts as they stand on the records of history.

All the precautions adopted by the Government would, probably, have proved inadequate to avert, or to repel, the coming storm, had not a person, who was privy to the plans of the rebels, most providentially interfered to prevent their accomplishment. Mr. Thomas Reynolds, who had been a silk manufacturer in Dublin, having acquired a competent independence, had retired to an estate which he had purchased at Kilkea Castle, in the County of Kildare, where he had considerable influence among the Romanists. This circumstance induced Lord Edward Fitzgerald, and Mr. Oliver Bond, two of the chief conspirators, to exert every effort in order to gain him over to their cause. They succeeded, at last, and Mr. Reynolds took the usual Oath at the house of Bond, in Dublin, at the beginning of 1797. He was persuaded to accept the commission of Colonel in the Rebel Army, with the offices of Treasurer and Representative of the County of Kildare, and, afterwards, that of delegate for the province of Leinster. He soon, however, discovered that the conspirators, instead

of intending to reform the abuses of the State, and to abolish all religious distinctions, which was their professed object at first, meditated the subversion of the Constitution, the massacre of the leading members of the Government, and of such persons as should oppose their designs, and, therefore, he resolved to frustrate their plans, by embracing the first opportunity of communicating them to some person in whom he could confide.

After he had adopted this resolution, an opportunity presented itself for carrying it into effect. In a conversation which he had with a Mr. Cope, an eminent merchant of Dublin, that gentleman deplored, in strong terms, the dreadful outrages committed in various parts of the kingdom, which he justly considered as evident symptoms of an approaching rebellion. This opening Mr. Reynolds gladly availed himself of, and he informed his friend, that he knew a person who was possessed of all the secrets of the rebels, and who, by way of atonement for the crime which he had committed by joining them, was disposed to communicate to government all he knew of their plans and designs.—The only conditions which Reynolds prescribed, were the concealment of his name, for the present, and the supply of such a sum of money as would be necessary to pay the

extraordinary expence which he must incur, by a temporary absence from the country, where his life, in consequence of his disclosure of the schemes of the rebels, would be exposed to the most imminent danger. These preliminary arrangements having been concluded, he unfolded the whole of this nefarious scheme. And, in consequence of this information, Mr. Swan, a magistrate of Dublin, accompanied by twelve serjeants, not in regimentals, repaired, on the twelfth of March, 1798, to the house of Oliver Bond, in Bridge Street, where the Leinster delegates were sitting in council. Here they seized a variety of important documents, containing such information as led to a discovery of the whole plot, and the particulars of the intended insurrection. The delegates, thirteen in number, were apprehended, as were, on the the same day, Thomas A. Emmett, a barrister, William James M'Nevin, Messieurs Bond, Sweetman, Henry and Hugh Jackson;—and warrants were issued against three others of the leading conspirators, Lord Edward Fitzgerald; Richard M'Cormick, and W. Sampson, a barrister, who had effected their escape.*

It was not the intention of the rebels to

* All these particulars are extracted from the report of the Secret Committee of the Irish Parliament.

make their destined attack on the government, before they had secured the assistance of their French allies; but, having perceived, that the judicious conduct of government, in blending mercy with rigour, extending the former to the repentant, and making the refractory feel the effects of the latter; and having all their plans unexpectedly disclosed, by the arrest of so many of their principal members, they resolved to make one desperate effort. For this purpose, their military committee immediately digested a plan for a general rising; they proposed to make themselves masters of the capital, and to secure the neighbouring camp at Laughlinstown, and the park of artillery at Chapelizod, on the same night. The rebels of the counties of Dublin, Wicklow, and Kildare, were to co-operate in this grand attack. As soon as the insurrection had thus commenced, the event was to be signified to the distant counties, in the North and South, by the stoppage of the mail coaches.

The fabrication of those murderous instruments of rebellion, pikes, was now carried on with the utmost industry, and with such barefaced effrontery, that blacksmiths were detected in making them, even at noon-day:* while

* Musgrave's Memoirs, p. 203.

leaden gutters were stripped off the houses to be converted into bullets. So ripe were the populace of Dublin for rebellion, that it required more prudence to restrain, than zeal to stimulate, their efforts. In the month of April, a large body of them assembled in *the liberty*, and attempted to demolish the houses of some loyal subjects, but were prevented by the timely interposition of the Yeomanry. So confident were they of success, that, so long before as March, 1797, when the time for the renewal of publicans' licenses arrived, the persons who applied for them told the magistrates, with a stern and insolent air, that that would be their last application;* and, in March, 1799, they used the same language. On the thirtieth of March, the Viceroy found it necessary to publish a proclamation, containing the most direct and positive orders to the officers commanding his Majesty's forces, to employ them with the utmost vigour and decision for the suppression of a treasonable conspiracy against the government and constitution, which had manifested itself in open acts of violence and rebellion.

It was now deemed expedient to place

* Musgrave's Memoirs, p. 204. If the magistrates had discharged their duty, they would not have renewed the licences of men who had dared to make use of such threatening language.

Mr. Reynolds in a state of security. For this purpose he was arrested, on the sixth of May, by a party of the military, at Castledermot, and conveyed, in custody, to Dublin; and, as the rebels, who had discovered, what they called, his treachery, formed many plots against his life, he claimed the protection of government, and was provided with apartments at the castle. The rebels, however, defeated their own object, by attacking the character and conduct of Mr. Reynolds; since, by so doing, they effectually removed those scruples which he had hitherto cherished, and made him resolve to stand publicly forth, to reveal their plots to the world, and to bring them to condign punishment. A conspiracy was formed for murdering the Lord Chancellor Clare; and it was in agitation to seize his children, in order to hold them as hostages. On the eleventh of May, the government issued a proclamation, offering a reward of one thousand pounds, to any one who should apprehend Lord Edward Fitzgerald. Eight days after this proclamation appeared, certain information was received, that Lord Edward was in Dublin, and lodged in the house of one Murphy, a dealer in feathers, in Thomas-street. Accordingly, early in the evening of the nineteenth, Captains Swan and Ryan, of the Volunteers, with eight soldiers in disguise, repaired

thither in order to apprehend him. While the officers were posting their men in such a manner as to prevent the possibility of an escape, Swan saw a woman run hastily up the stairs of Murphy's house, and, conceiving that she was going to apprize Lord Edward of their approach, he instantly followed her. He entered a room in which he found the object of his search lying on a bed, in his dressing jacket; and he informed his lordship that he had a warrant against him, and that resistance would be vain, assuring him, at the same time, that he would be treated with the utmost respect. Lord Edward, however, knowing that his life was forfeited to the violated laws of his country, resolved not to surrender it without a struggle. With a resolution, worthy a better cause, he sprang from the bed, and snapped a pistol at Swan, which missed fire. He then drew a dagger, rushed upon Swan, and stabbed and cut him in several places. In this scuffle, Swan received a deep and dangerous wound under the ribs, which bled most profusely. Captain Ryan now came to the assistance of his colleague, and snapped a pocket pistol at Lord Edward, which missed fire; he then made a lunge at him with a sword-cane, which bent on his ribs, but which affected him so much, that Lord Edward threw himself upon the bed. Ryan now attempted to secure him,

when another scuffle ensued, in which his lordship plunged a dagger into the side of his assailant; they then both fell from the bed to the ground, and, when there, Ryan received many other desperate wounds, and one in the abdomen, so large, that his bowels came out on the floor.* At this instant, Major Sirr entered the room, and found the two wounded officers on the floor, each holding a leg of Lord Edward, who was moving towards the door. Sirr fired at his Lordship, and wounded him in the shoulder, on which he called out for mercy, and surrendered himself.—An attempt was made, by a numerous body of rebels, to rescue their leader, on his way to the castle, but Major Sirr having judiciously applied for a military force, it arrived in time to defeat their plan. Two days after this transaction, on the twenty-first of May, Messrs. Henry and John Sheares, two barristers, brothers, and natives of Cork, with Patrick Byrne, a bookseller in Grafton-street, Dublin, were apprehended; when, in the house of Henry Sheares, a most sanguinary proclamation was found, which was intended for circulation, the morning after the projected insurrection and massacre. The next day the House of Commons were apprized,

* Ryan died of his wounds, in a few days, leaving behind him the character of an upright man, and a most loyal subject.

by the Secretary to the Viceroy, that his excellency had received information that the disaffected had been daring enough to form a plan, for the purpose of possessing themselves, in the course of that week, of the metropolis, of seizing the seat of government, and those in authority within the city; that, in consequence of such information, he had directed every military precaution to be taken which seemed expedient; that he had made full communication to the magistrates for the direction of their efforts; and that he had not a doubt, by the measures which would be pursued, that the designs of the rebels would be effectually and totally crushed. The address voted by the House contained every assurance of determined support which the occasion required; and it was presented by the whole House, with the Speaker at their head, who proceeded, on foot, through the streets, to the castle, in order to give the greater effect to their conduct.

The night of the twenty-third of May was finally fixed upon, as the commencement of that dreadful epoch, in which the empire of the law was to yield to the dominion of arms; in which the voice of humanity was to be silenced by the yells of assassination; the suggestions of conscience to be stifled by the dictates of fanaticism; the reign of social order to give place to

the anarchy of rebellion; reason to be subdued by brutal force; and in which the fair face of a country, supereminently blessed by the bounteous hand of Providence, was to be disfigured and deformed, converted into a scene of desolation and blood, by the parricidal rage of her own children.

The plan of the rebels appears to have been laid with ability, and, from the smallness of the garrison of Dublin, had it not been for the seizure of Lord Edward Fitzgerald, and other of their leaders, it is most probable that it would have been completely successful. Neilson, contrary to the opinion of Sheares, had resolved, in the first instance, to attack the prison of Newgate, in which Lord Edward Fitzgerald was confined,* and to liberate all the prisoners; and, about ten at night, having stationed his men at different posts, in the neighbourhood, he went to reconnoitre the place. Gregg, the keeper of Newgate, having perceived and recognized him, made an attempt to seize him, which Neilson resisted; two yeomen, however, coming up to Gregg's assistance, this rebel leader allowed himself to be taken, although he had thousands of armed men within a short distance of the spot; so ill were *his* measures combined for the accomplishment of the object which he had in view.

* Lord Edward Fitzgerald died of his wounds, in Newgate, on the fourth of June.

The castle was to have been attacked, at the same moment, in front and rear, by two desperate bands of ruffians, armed with cutlasses and pistols. A select party were to be provided with long ladders, by means of which they could enter the bed-chambers of the principal members of the government, whom it was intended either to murder or to carry off as hostages. In the mean time the city was to have been set on fire in four different places, and the bason which supplied it with water, and the pipes through which it was conveyed, were to be destroyed.

In pursuance of the original plan, the Belfast mail-coach was stopped and burned near Santry; the Cork mail-coach was destroyed near Naas, and that destined for Athlone, at Lucan. The rebels at Santry called upon the inhabitants of the neighbouring cottages to rise, assuring them that the city and castle of Dublin were, by that time, in possession of their friends.—So confident were they of the success of their plans. The coachman and guard of the Limerick mail-coach were murdered near the Curragh of Kildare.

The provincial rebels, in the neighbourhood of Dublin, were only prevented from acting, by the apprehension of their leaders, and by the intelligence which they received of the slender garrison in the capital being under arms. But

for these circumstances the attack on the metropolis would have been most formidable, and, as has been before observed, would, in all probability, have been successful; when the most dreadful consequences must have ensued, whether the rebels had ultimately succeeded or failed. The danger, too, was greatly increased by the discovery that, "near nine-tenths of the Roman Catholics in the Yeomanry corps were united Irishmen, and had taken an oath to be true to the rebels, in direct contradiction to their sworn allegiance; and that many of them, after having taken the oath of rebellion, had, by deliberate and pre-determined perjury, joined the Yeomanry corps for the purpose of getting arms into their hands, of learning the use of them, and of turning them against the loyalists, perhaps in the very moment of danger."* It was remarked that, in the city of Dublin, above two thousand Catholics solicited admittance into the several corps of Yeomanry during the six weeks immediately preceding the insurrection; and that most of them were proposed by Catholic yeomen, who afterwards either proved to be rebels, or were disarmed, under circumstances of strong suspicion.† It was further discovered,

* Musgrave's Memoirs, p. 220

† Idem Ibid. Sir Richard Musgrave specifies several of the Yeomanry corps, in which the Catholic members were

that the Popish domestics, both male and female, with very few exceptions, had taken the oath of the UNION, and were to have assisted in the projected insurrection and massacre of the night of the 23d of May.—There were above twenty thousand servants of this description in Dublin.*

Although the timely discovery of this infernal plan had enabled the government, most earnestly seconded by the loyal inhabitants of Dublin, to avert the intended effect of its first explosion, the rebels were by no means discouraged; the insurrection extended to various parts of the kingdom, and Ireland was now placed under martial law. Most of the regular forces had, at different periods, been sent on foreign service, and their places supplied by Fencible regiments, many of them Scotch. The same day on which the rebellion broke out in Dublin, May the 23d, the towns of Naas, Carlow, Baltingglass, Monasteven, and Clare, were attacked, and the rebels beaten at each of them, principally by the Irish Militia and Yeomen. On the 29th of the same month, General Sir James Duff defeated a large body of the

deeply concerned in the rebellion; and this was particularly the case in the Saint Sepulchre's corps, in which the Popish Yeomen were disarmed for having conspired to murder their Protestant officers, and fellow-soldiers.

* Idem Ibid. p. 221.

rebels, on the Curragh of Kildare, and opened the passage from Dublin to Munster, which had been obstructed by them. On the same day, the town of Enniscorthy, in the county of Wexford, was attacked by the rebels, commanded by one Murphy, the Romish Priest of a neighbouring parish. It was defended by the Protestant Yeomanry alone. Enniscorthy is an open place, without fortifications, and the action was fought at the outskirts of the town. The Yeomanry did not exceed three hundred, while the rebel force amounted to six thousand men. The contest was long and bloody. Forty-seven of the Yeomanry were killed, and above five hundred of the rebels. When the Romish inhabitants of the town saw the rebels give way, they set fire to the houses, most of which were thatched, in the rear of the Yeomanry, and obliged them, by the smoke and heat, to file off from the town, which was then entered by the rebels. The Yeomanry retreated, without molestation, to Wexford, at the distance of eleven miles. The day before, the rebels had defeated a party of about a hundred of the North Cork Militia, most of whom they killed, and got possession of their muskets and ammunition, with which they greatly galled the Enniscorthy Yeomanry. On this success, the peasantry of the country, most of whom were Romanists, joined the rebels, who

marched on to Wexford, which is a sea-port, and the county-town. There were but few troops in the place. Some gentlemen in the neighbourhood raised Yeomanry corps, but, having imprudently enrolled Romanists amongst them, they, to a man, deserted to the rebels, with their arms and ammunition; and there were numbers of Romish inhabitants in the town, who showed evident signs of disaffection. These circumstances induced the commander of the troops to evacuate Wexford, and to retire with his force, including the Yeomanry of Enniscorthy, to Duncannon Fort, a strong post at the distance of about thirty miles.

By this means the Rebels became masters of Wexford, when they were immediately joined by the great body of the Romanists, in the Counties of Wexford, Wicklow, Kildare, and Carlow. They defeated a detachment of the Army which had marched from Dublin, under Colonel Walpole, who suffered himself to be surprised by them, and who lost his life in the action. The remains of his party retired into the County of Wicklow, and took post at Arklow. The Rebels, elated with their success, mustered their forces, and advanced, on the fifth of June, against the Town of Ross, which, with Duncannon-Fort, and the Town of Newtown-Barry, where the only

places in the County of Wexford, of which they were not in possession. The County of Dublin Militia, led by Lord Mountjoy, with some other troops of Yeomanry, forming, in the whole, a body of fifteen hundred men, under the command of Generals Johnson and Eustace, were stationed at Ross. The Town is not fortified; there are some remains of an old wall, but it is now in ruins. The Rebels commenced the attack with a body of twenty-five thousand men. The troops had marched out of the Town to receive them, and, in order to throw them into disorder, the Rebels, with their pikes, drove a vast number of horses and oxen before them. The Rebels had some field pieces and howitzers, which they had taken, partly, from a small detachment of the Garrison of Duncannon-Fort, which had been, imprudently, sent out against them; and, partly, from the troops under Colonel Walpole. Their leaders had distributed among them a considerable quantity of whiskey, in order to render them more desperate by intoxication. They attacked the troops with great fury; and Lord Mountjoy was killed, gallantly fighting at the head of his regiment.* The weight of the Rebel column,

* This Nobleman was the first person who introduced a Bill into the Irish Parliament for the repeal of a part of the

after a furious contest, forced the troops into the Town, and the battle was continued, with great obstinacy, in the streets, till, at length, the courage and discipline of the Loyalists prevailed over the superior numbers of the Rebels, who were compelled, after a dreadful carnage, to retreat. Their slain, in the streets of the Town and suburbs, amounted to two thousand two hundred, exclusive of numbers who, with difficulty, withdrew from the scene of action, and, afterwards, died of their wounds. The military were so fatigued that they were unable to pursue them. The battle, from the first attack of the Rebels to their final retreat, lasted eight hours.*

Popery Code, and, says a contemporary writer, "he, unfortunately, felt the bitter effects and inefficiency of his own system of conciliation."

* On the day on which the battle of Ross was fought, the barbarous massacre of Scullabogue took place. Scullabogue was situated about half a mile from the Rebel camp on Carrickbyrne Hill, in the County of Wexford, and a barn, there, was converted into a place of confinement for Protestant prisoners. Here, with a degree of savage ferocity, and of cold-blooded malice, the barbarians, deliberately, murdered two hundred and twenty-one innocent Protestants, of all ages and of both sexes. They set fire to the barn which contained one hundred and eighty-four of these wretched victims, and thirty-seven were shot in front of the building. The horrid circumstances of cruelty attending this massacre are detailed,

The inability to pursue the Rebels having prevented the dispersion of their army, their leaders resolved to try their fortunes again; and, in a few days after their unsuccessful attack on Ross, they marched to the opposite side of the County of Wexford, and assaulted the Town of Arklow,—situated on the great road from Wexford to Dublin, about thirty-three miles from the Capital. The Rebels had eighteen thousand men, while the troops, who opposed them, under General Needham, did not exceed twelve hundred. Notwithstanding this disparity of numbers, the Rebels were again repulsed with great slaughter, chiefly by the courage of the Cavan Militia, under Colonel Barry, the Durham Fencibles, commanded by Colonel Skerrett, and a considerable body of Yeomanry.

at length, in the interesting Memoirs of Sir Richard Musgrave, accompanied by the authorities for all the various facts which the author relates. Hence it appears, that the Captain of this sanguinary band refused to give the order for the massacre until he had received the commands of a Priest for that purpose. Five Romanists also perished in the barn at Scullabogue; two of them were thus murdered because they would not consent to the murder of their Protestant masters;---a third, for playing, on his bag-pipes, a loyal song; and the two others, father and son, for being suspected of loyalty from having obtained a pass from General Fawcett.---*Musgrave's Memoirs*, p. 425—428.

On the seventh of June, a body of Rebels suddenly assembled in the county of Antrim, in the northern part of Ireland, rushed furiously into the town of Antrim, where many of the gentry and magistracy of the county were assembled, and among the rest, Lord O'Neil. The Yeomen of the place immediately flew to arms, and a contest ensued, in which Lord O'Neil received a mortal wound. About the same time the Rebels rose in a part of the county of Down, but were immediately attacked, defeated, and dispersed, by General Nugent, who commanded the troops at Belfast. This insurrection broke out on the estates of Lord Moira, most of whose tenants were actively engaged in it.

The Rebels, in the county of Wexford, where the chief force of the Leinster Insurgents was concentrated, after their defeat at Ross and at Arklow, drew their main body together, consisting of about eighteen thousand men, to Enniscorthy, and encamped on a high and steep hill, called Vinegar Hill, adjacent to that town which it overlooks and commands;—the Slany, a very considerable river, running at the base of the hill in a winding channel, and washing one-half of its circumference. This was a very strong post, and, if well defended, might have bid defiance to a consider-

able army. Defeated as the Rebels had been, they seemed to have given up the idea of offensive operations, till their French succours should arrive, which they impatiently expected; and, relying on the strength of their position, determined, there, to await the attack of the Royal army which they knew to be assembling on all sides. They had, at the same time, a numerous garrison in the town of Wexford, and were in possession of the whole sea-coast from Arklow to the mouth of Waterford harbour, all which their present position effectually covered. The passage from thence to the French coast, particularly to Brest, was short; they had some good cannon and howitzers, and were in no want of ammunition. In this formidable position, and thus provided, they were attacked by the Royal army, a great portion of which consisted of Militia and Yeomen, and driven from it, after a short, feeble, and ineffectual struggle. The whole body of Rebels would have been taken or destroyed, had not one column of the army, under General Needham, from some confusion or mistake in the orders, been prevented from taking the situation which had originally been appointed for it; by which means an opening was left, in the line of circumvallation (which, but for this, had been complete) through which nearly the

whole of the rebel army escaped in the greatest disorder, part of them flying towards the mountains of Wicklow, and part to that chain of mountains which divides the counties of Carlow and Wexford.*

* When the Rebels determined to fix their head-quarters at Vinegar Hill, they took the neighbouring town of Enniscorthy, in which they committed the most dreadful ravages, and the most wanton acts of barbarity. One of the first objects on which they wreaked their fanatical vengeance was the Parish Church, which they completely gutted, and burnt all the materials at the door, where they tore into pieces the bibles and prayer-books. They burnt the parsonage-house, destroyed between four and five hundred other habitations, and massacred a great number of Protestant inhabitants, without distinction of age or condition. Indeed, it appears, that they held permanent Committees of assassination, in their camp on Vinegar Hill, under the immediate direction of their Priests, who did not scruple to sanction, with their countenance, acts of rebellion, and deeds of murder. When the destined victims were led forth to be murdered in cold blood, the executioners often knelt down, crossed themselves, and said a prayer, before they performed their bloody task. Mr. Ram, a brother of Lord Courtown, was informed, by his Catholic tenants, that they had entered into the rebellion, at the instigation of their Priests, that it was usual, in the Rebel camp, for the Priest of each parish to call over the names of his own parishioners; and that, in the event of being incapacitated by age or infirmity, his coadjutor supplied his place. Mass was regularly said in the camp, and all the forms of the Roman Church rigorously observed. Among the most conspicuous of the Rebel Priests were Fathers Murphy,

The Rebels in the town of Wexford, hearing of the defeat, abandoned the place, and joined that party which fled towards the Wicklow mountains. The day before they fled, however, they took ninety-seven Protestants from the prison of Wexford, and murdered them with pikes on the bridge; and the massacre of one hundred more was intended for the following day; when the approach of the Royal army compelled the Rebels to forego the completion of their bloody purpose, and to seek for safety in flight. It is lamentable to relate, that here, as in every other place, where similar acts of cruelty were perpetrated, the

Roche, Kearns, and Sutton, who were not less active in their temporal character of Rebels than in their spiritual character of Priests. It is believed, that not less than five hundred Protestants were thus deliberately murdered, in the Rebel camp, under no other pretence, than that they were *Heretics* or *Protestants*. And, when they murdered their victims, the Rebels frequently declared their resolution to extirpate Heresy, by serving all Heretics in the same way. These facts are established, in a manner that leaves no room to question their authenticity, by Sir Richard Musgrave, in his Memoirs, who has displayed the most laudable industry, in the collection of documents and proofs, for placing the object of the Rebellion, and the conduct of the Rebels, in a true point of view.—Whatever objections the prejudiced voice of Party may oppose to his deductions, the facts which he has collected speak for themselves, in a voice too strong to be stifled by artifice, or silenced by sophistry.

Popish multitude acted under the influence, and mostly under the immediate direction, of their Priests. And, though there were fifteen or sixteen Popish Priests resident in the town, there was but one, Father Corrin, who interfered to save the life of a single Protestant.*

* It is clearly demonstrated by Sir Richard Musgrave, that the Priests possessed unbounded influence over the Rebels, whence it follows, of necessity, not only that they could have prevented the numerous massacres which they perpetrated, but even the Rebellion itself.—— Wherever they granted protections, they were uniformly respected by the rebels, and the parties who bore them walked about in safety. A young man from Ross is stated to have been so shocked at the massacres on the bridge of Wexford, as to have hastened to Doctor Caulfield, the Popish Bishop of the diocese, to inform him of them, and to beseech him to prevent them. The Bishop refused to interfere himself, but said his chaplain, Father Roche, who was present, should go for that purpose. No one, however, witnessed the interposition of Mr. Roche. George Taylor, in his history of the rebellion in the county of Wexford, observes, that, during the massacres, "a rebel captain, shocked at the cries of the victims, ran to the Popish Bishop, who was then drinking wine with the utmost composure after dinner; and, knowing that he could stop the massacre sooner than any other person, entreated him, for the mercy of God, to come and save the prisoners. He, in a very unconcerned manner, replied, "It was no affair of his;" and requested the captain would sit down and take a glass of wine with him, adding, "*that the people must be gratified.*" The captain refused the bishop's invitation; and, filled with abhorrence and distress of mind, walked silently away." It requires

When the King's troops entered Wexford, they took the rebel leaders, Father Roche, and

no great skill in casuistry to know, that the man who has the power to prevent a murder, without incurring any danger himself, and refuses to exert it, is chargeable with all the moral guilt which attaches to a consent to the commission of murder. But it is conceived, that a minister of religion, whose duty it is to enforce, as far as he is able, obedience to every commandment of God, and who is in the habit of proclaiming that precept of the decalogue "THOU SHALT DO NO MURDER," is chargeable with something more than the moral guilt attaching to the *consent*, when he allows a murder to be committed, which he has the ability to prevent, and especially when he is called upon and exhorted to prevent it.

When a charge so serious is preferred against ministers of religion, as that of violating every principle of duty, by encouraging crimes which they are bound, if possible, to prevent, it is highly necessary to adduce the strongest proofs in support of it. A lady of Wexford, who kept a diary in which she marked the proceedings of the rebels, while they were in possession of that town, states the following circumstance. "Mr. Patrick Redmond, a Roman Catholic, and one of the Committee for provisions, came to us the evening of the day the massacre was committed. He was, like ourselves, half-dead with horror, and declared, that he entreated the priests to come down with their crucifixes and prevent the massacre; *but they all refused to do so.* We told him that Father Broe said he had saved nineteen prisoners. This Mr. Redmond denied, and said it was the express," (meaning the express from the rebel camp at Vinegar-Hill, announcing the approach of the Royal army) "that saved them."

Doctor M'Nevin, in his evidence before a Secret Committee of the Irish House of Lords, in August, 1798, depo[illegible]d,

Keogh, who were tried and executed.—The Rebel General John Hay was also taken by Gen.

"That the Catholic priests had ceased to be alarmed at the calumnies which had been propagated of French irreligion, and were well affected to the cause; that some of them had rendered great service in propagating, with discreet zeal, the system of the Irish union."

Though Doctor Caulfield did not chuse to devote a few minutes to the purpose of rescuing innocent Protestants from a cruel death, he could, it seems, without hesitation, pass a whole hour in the street, in bestowing—will posterity believe the fact? his BENEDICTIONS on rebels, with the instruments of murder in their hands, and on their way to perpetrate the most horrible acts of unprovoked and savage cruelty. The following affidavit, which is extracted from the appendix to Sir Richard Musgrave's Memoirs, was made by Mrs. Crane, a most respectable lady, sister to the Irish Judge Chamberlaine:—

"*County of Wexford to wit.*

ELIZABETH CRANE, of the county of Wexford, widow, being duly sworn on the Holy Evangelists, deposeth and saith, That on the twentieth day of June last, she was in her own house, in great anxiety, apprehending, from circumstances which had happened that morning, the life of her son-in-law, Middleton Robson, a loyalist, then a prisoner in the gaol of Wexford, to be in immediate and imminent danger; that in the afternoon of said twentieth day, between the hours of two and four of the clock, as said deponent believeth, she saw the Rev. Doctor Caulfield, accompanied by the Rev. Mr. Roche, a priest of said town, pass by her house towards a lane which communicates from the back street of said town, to Gibson's lane, which gave her great pleasure, as she supposed they were going to intercede for the prisoners. That near the entrance of said lane they were met by a number of men, armed with

Dundas's army, and hanged. Mr. Bagenall Harvey, and Mr. John Colclough, two other of

pikes and other weapons, coming, as she believeth, from the gaol, who, as they came up to Doctor Caulfield, kneeled down, for the purpose, as deponent believeth, of receiving Dr. Caulfield's blessing, which he gave, spreading his hands over their heads, as she had seen him do to others whom he blessed, and that the men afterwards passed on, as she supposeth, to the bridge; and that very shortly afterwards, two men, armed with pikes, entered her house, who told her, "They were slaughtering on the bridge; that they would never draw bridle, till they would put them all on a level, and that by that time to-morrow, there would be neither buying or selling in Wexford;" and that immediately before, or during, the time Doctor Caulfield was blessing, which was of a tedious length, nearly, as she thinks, an hour, said deponent heard a shot, by which she believes Matthewson was killed at the gaol

ELIZABETH CRANE.

Sworn before me at Wexford, this sixteenth day of March, 1799.

WILLIAM TOOLE.

As an additional proof of the influence and authority enjoyed and exercised by the priests, with the rebels, it must be added, that the same Father Corrin, who has been before mentioned, was in the habit of granting *protections* which were always respected. A Mrs. Lett, wife to a brewer at Enniscorthy, swore, upon the trial of a rebel, that she had herself a protection from Father Corrin; and that her husband being a prisoner in Wexford gaol, one Thomas Clooney, a rebel, offered to become surety for his good behaviour, "If Mr. Corrin would *allow* him to be taken out of gaol," and that she went with the paper to Mr. Corrin, but *he would not* ALLOW *him to be liberated.*

I am very well aware that Doctor Caulfield, the Popish

their leaders, were apprehended in an island, about six leagues from Wexford, and brought to

Bishop of Wexford, and several of his clergy, published an answer to Sir Richard Musgrave's Memoirs, in which the Bishop did not scruple to deny the facts stated in the above affidavit of Mrs. Crane; asserting that he did not leave his house on the day of the massacre in Wexford; and producing the oath of his servant to corroborate his own affirmation; which servant, however, only says that "*to the best of his knowledge* his said master, Doctor Caulfield, did not leave his house on that day." Now this cautious deposition of the servant cannot be opposed to the positive testimony of Mrs. Crane, who is represented as a lady of great piety and of unimpeached character; and who could have neither interest nor any other motive to misrepresent such a fact.—She saw the Bishop bless the rebels; and she swore to what she saw. It would be an insult to common sense, as well as a violation of common justice, to put the interested assertion of Doctor Caulfield, in competition with the unbiassed testimony of such a witness. That the doctor was in the habit of bestowing his benedictions on these children of Satan, who rebelled against their king, and murdered his loyal subjects, is proved by other evidence. Mr. Loftus Richards, a respectable inhabitant of Wexford, has declared, "That *he saw* Doctor Caulfield, *the morning after the massacre*, meet a party of rebels in a street there, and that they fell on their knees, and remained in that posture till they received his benediction." Some Protestant ladies, who were prisoners at Wexford, also affirmed, that they were frequently eye-witnesses of this scene; and that a body of the lower class of people never met Doctor Caulfield, without kneeling, and remaining on their knees till he blessed them.—*Observations on the Reply of the Right Reverend Doctor Caulfield, Roman Catholic Bishop, and of the Roman Catholic Clergy, of Wexford, to the misrepre-*

that town, where they suffered the sentence of the law, together with Cornelius Grogan, and

sentations of Sir Richard Musgrave, Bart. &c. 8vo. Dublin, p. 24. But, on such a subject, the evidence of a Popish Priest may, by the advocates of Doctor Caulfield, probably, be deemed more satisfactory, than the testimony of Protestants. The following is an Extract from a Letter, dated August the 30th, 1799, from Father Byrne, a Priest in the diocese of Wexford, to Mr. Donovan, a most respectable Attorney, of Peter-Street, Dublin.

" Sir,

" I am a Romish Priest.---Imposed upon *by the example of my Bishop*, I said mass at the Rebel camp; my behaviour during the time was such, that I am neither sorry for, nor ashamed of, it. I saved from twenty to thirty lives; who will make affidavit of it in any Court; and this I look upon to be more meritorious (at least in the sight of God) than running away like many others, who now make such a boast of their loyalty. As a proof of the public good-will towards me, my Chapel has never been insulted, though situated in the most public place in the county. On the return of the King's Government, my first concern was, to obtain his Majesty's pardon, for that degree of rebellion of which I was guilty, which (long may he live!) I obtained without any difficulty;--- but guess, Sir, my astonishment at receiving a letter from my Bishop, silencing me from my clerical function in this diocese, when his own conduct was what chiefly led me astray, (if I except the degree of terror the Rebels put me into after the Government was upset all round me,) for, during the ferment, which preceded the explosion, he never instructed me how to act. Instead of excommunicating them for their horrid rebellion, *he gave them his benediction* in the Chapel-yard, two days before they took possession of Wexford. *Instead of*

another of the Rebel chiefs. Mr. Harvey was a man of a weak mind, who had been led into

excommunicating the barbarous murderers at —— —— he gave all his Priests power to give absolution for murder;---a power which he ever till then reserved to himself. Even the last battle in this county *was fought by his direction*, and the Priest, who served as his Aide-de-camp on the occasion, he kept in his house till last spring, when he was obliged to smuggle him out of the country, otherwise he would have fallen a victim to outraged justice; and, indeed, it is but of little avail to me, that the King should grant me both my life and liberty, if he suffers this gentleman to starve me. I have been at a great expence to qualify myself to live by the Gospel, and am now too old to embark in any other line, to procure myself bread.—Hence I conceive, and am advised thereto, that the laws of my country will procure me redress; nor do I think it a weak argument in proof of my loyalty, that I am the first Priest who has appealed to the laws of my country in preference to a foreign jurisdiction. My losses, on his account to the present day, I state at one hundred and six guineas, I, therefore, beseech you, Sir, to take my case in hand, and if you find me law, I will find you money."

The Bishop was evidently, on this occasion, playing a deep game, and acting most insidiously; by impeaching the loyalty of others in order to secure his own from suspicion. He probably deemed this necessary for the purpose of obtaining, from the new Viceroy, a *certificate of loyalty*, which was procured through the medium of Doctor Troy, with as little difficulty as could be expected, on the following terms:

"SIR, "*Dublin Castle, May* 11, 1800.

"In answer to the honour of your Letter of the 9th inst. which I have laid before my Lord Lieutenant, I am to assure you, that Government will give Doctor Caulfield that protec-

the Rebellion by the artifices and persuasions of abler, and of bolder, villains." He was not

tion, which, from his conduct and character, as a loyal subject, he appears justly to merit.

" I have the honour to be, Sir,

" Your most obedient Servant,

" *To the Most Rev. Docter Troy,* " E. B. LITTLEHALES.
North King Street."

And, in another Letter, from Colonel Littlehales, dated June the 30th, that officer says, " that his Excellency has no cause to alter the opinion he has imbibed of *the loyalty and proper deportment* of Doctor Caulfield." No doubt, Doctor Troy, himself, was the voucher for the loyalty and proper deportment of his spiritual colleague. What that *loyalty* was, and what that *proper deportment,* the facts which have been related sufficiently explain.---But it is perfectly clear that Lord Cornwallis was most inaccurately informed of the conduct and principles of individuals, and exercised very little discrimination, in appreciating both *facts* and *actions.*

The following affidavit will throw some further light on the conduct of Doctor Caulfield, which procured the honourable testimony of the Viceroy, as well as on that of Father Kavenagh, another Romish Priest.

" John Higgenbottom sweareth, on the Holy Evangelists, that he was a prisoner, with the Rebels, in Gorey, the day of the battle of Arklow, that he was bailed out by Farlong, Darcy, and Rossiter of Gorey, and thereby permitted to be a prisoner at large; that he went with Rossiter into Darcy's, a public house, and into a room where they sat to drink, and shortly after, Kavenagh and Synnot, priests, and two *other* Rebels, came into them; that after some time, Synnot said, " Murphy (Father John Murphy a Rebel leader) had but seven men when he began the business, and now you see what it has come to;" he then took out a letter, and shewed it to Redmond, saying,

cruel in his disposition, and often interfered to prevent the effusion of blood. On his trial,

" You may read that, and see how long I have been concerned in this business; and, though I stood against it as long as I could, you may see, in that Letter, HOW I WAS COMPELLED BY THE BISHOP TO IT." Some time after, while the battle raged, and could be heard, he said, " There are some people now lashed round hell with an iron flail."

Sworn before me, JOHN HIGGENBOTTOM.

PETER BROWNE.

" I certify that the above affidavit was made before me; and that I know Higgenbottom well, and believe him to be well worthy of credit."

PETER BROWNE, *Dean of Ferns.*

When Mr. Allen, a Protestant of New Ross, who had lived in habits of intimacy with Doctor Caulfield, was in prison, at Wexford, his wife implored the Doctor to liberate him; but he refused to interfere, observing, that her husband would not have been there, if he had not deserved it!!!

Doctor Caulfield's *certificate of loyalty* will not enable him to invalidate these facts, which are established on the best authority, nor yet to stand up against them. Indeed, the mere application for a certificate of loyalty, implies the consciousness of some just grounds for the impeachment of loyalty, in the applicant.--- On this same principle, no doubt, an officer, recently cashiered for *cowardice*, judged it prudent, some years before his character was fully known, to obtain, from his colleagues, a *certificate of courage!* This application was the more extraordinary, as the book in which his conduct was exposed had not appeared at the time when it was made.— The Doctor, however, proved his gratitude to the easy Viceroy, by prevailing on the Popish multitude, who had made the most sanguinary efforts, in 1798, for promoting the separation of the

he declared, " that he had become a member of the Union three years before, that he imagined

two kingdoms, to sign an address, in 1799, in favour of the plan in agitation for uniting them for ever. Indeed, in the *certificate* and the *address*, *cause* and *effect* may be clearly discerned.

In his pretended justification, Doctor Caulfield peremptorily denies, that the protections granted by the priests during the rebellion had any effect, and even insinuates that none were granted. His words are, " As to the invariable effects of protections granted by priests, I repeat and insist, there were none; nor could any priest, except a blockhead, attempt to grant any such." Most certainly protections were granted, very frequently by priests; and they never failed to preserve the lives of those to whom they were granted. And, strange to say, Doctor Caulfield was, himself, the very blockhead whom he censures, for he granted the following protection to two gentlemen of Enniscorthy, who were in prison at Wexford; and, still more strange, it procured their immediate release.

" From the excellent characters of the above gentlemen, I beg leave, in the name of Jesus Christ, to recommend them to be protected.

" JAMES CAULFIELD.

" *Wexford, June 15th*, 1798."

In one part of his justification, (p. 18) the Doctor declares that he was absolutely ignorant of the massacre being intended or perpetrated, *until some hours after it had ceased.* A declaration, the falsehood of which is demonstrated as well by moral evidence as by positive testimony. But what the Doctor betrayed the greatest anxiety to establish was, the unwarrantable assertion (in his preface) that, " of all the insurrections that took place in Ireland, in 1798, the name of religion was only used

the only object was to reform the constitution; and that he had not, till recently, discovered, that

in Wexford." If there be any one fact more clearly demonstrated than another, relating to this dreadful rebellion, it is this—that *religion*, or rather *fanaticism*, was the grand engine by which the Popish multitude were put in motion, and stimulated to the commission of those horrid acts of cruelty which the historian shudders to record. Not only in the county of Wexford, was the extirpation of *heresy* the cry, but wherever the rebels were enabled to establish a footing. Of the many proofs which might be adduced in confirmation of this fact, the following will suffice to shew the inaccuracy of the Doctor's assertion. Soon after the French landed, the following notice was posted on the church of Killyshee, in the county of Westmeath. "Take notice, *heretick* usurpers! that the brave slaves of this island will no longer lie in bondage; the die is cast, our deliverers are come, and the royal brute," (meaning the King) "who held the iron rod of despotic tyranny, is expiring, nor shall *one* govern. Our old holy religion shall be re-established in *this house*, and the earth shall no longer be burdened with *bloody hereticks*, who, under the pretence of rebellion, (which they themselves have raised) mean to massacre us.

"The fleur de lis and harp we will display,
"While tyrant heretics shall mould to clay.
"Revenge! Revenge! Revenge!"

More attention has been bestowed on this subject than to many readers, possibly, may seem necessary. But so much pains seem to have been taken for keeping the most prominent feature of the rebellion out of sight, by all parties, that it became the duty of the historian to endeavour, at least, to

the Popish priests were deeply concerned in it, and that the extermination of Protestants was

remove the screen which had been placed to conceal it from public view. The Opposition, anxious only to fix blame and guilt on the government, not only denied the existence of every religious motive, but pertinaciously refused to ascribe the rebellion to any thing but those acts of coercion which they called oppressive, which were adopted for the purpose of checking its progress, and which, of course, were not carried into effect till *after* the rebellion, which they were stated to produce, had begun. They even went so far as to make it a question whether the people of Ireland had not a *right to rebel.* On the *twenty-first of June,* more than a fortnight after the horrible massacre of the Protestants, at Scullabogue, in the debate on the motion for allowing the English militia to serve in Ireland, Mr. Jekyll did not scruple to declare, "that he saw no reason for calling the disturbances in Ireland an *unnatural* and *wicked* rebellion. Unless proper and regular documents were laid before the House to *prove* that an unnatural and wicked rebellion raged in Ireland, how could we know but that the people of Ireland had *a right to make this resistance.*"* This is not the place to animadvert on language so grossly inflammatory and so highly unconstitutional. It is quoted, here, merely to shew the sentiments of the party on the Irish rebellion. On the other hand, the Ministers had no other means of justifying their system of *concession* to the Irish Papists, than by admitting their continued loyalty and good conduct, and, consequently, by discouraging every idea, that religion had any thing to do with the rebellion. But it is the duty of the historian to reject, alike, the misrepresentations of all parties, and to have, for his sole object, the establishment of truth.

* Woodfall's Parliamentary Reports.

their main design.* That, having opposed their sanguinary views, he was deposed, and the com-

It is impossible, after a careful examination of all the authenticated facts relating to this rebellion, and after an attentive perusal of all the documents which have appeared, not to conclude that, in respect of the great mass of the Papists, actively engaged in it, *it was, to all intents and purposes, a* RELIGIOUS WAR. When the rebellion, indeed, was first formed, from the desire to conciliate the Presbyterians of the North, and the few Protestant leaders who took a part in it, this object was most cautiously concealed. No sooner, however, did the time for its explosion arrive, than it became manifest, in all the proceedings of the rebels;—and the proofs of its existence are too numerous to admit of a doubt, and too strong to be shaken either by assertion or by argument. But, it must not be supposed that the nobility and principal gentry of the Romish Church in Ireland were implicated in the guilt of rebellion. On the contrary, they condemned the conduct of the infuriated multitude, and endeavoured, by their exhortations and example, to bring them back to the path of duty. A loyal address was drawn up, immediately after the rebellion broke out, which was subscribed by the Earls of Fingal and Kenmare, Dr. Troy, and many others of the principal Catholics, resident in and about the capital. Lord Fingal, too, manifested great activity and gallantry, at the head of his corps, in opposing the rebels in the field. And several of the Catholic gentlemen manifested equal zeal and loyalty. But the good conduct of the enlightened and loyal few did not alter the nature and character of the rebellion. Operating on such minds,

* This, we are assured, by the historian of the Irish rebellions, was kept a profound secret from the Protestant leaders.

mand was given to that infamous villain, Father Roche; that he was then carried to the Three-Rock Camp as a prisoner, where he remained a few days, and was so far at liberty as to be allowed to walk about; but so closely watched, that, with every wish to make his escape, he found it impossible, till the evening on which the rebels fled in every direction, on the approach of the King's troops." When asked, by a friend, how he came to consent to the bloody business of Scullabogue, he, with visible symptoms of horror, answered, "that it was brought about by an infamous, sanguinary popish faction."

The rebels who, after the evacuation of Wexford, had retreated towards the mountains of Carlow, passed from thence into the Kilkenny mountains, and there assaulted the little

perhaps, the tenets and principles of the Church of Rome might, possibly, not produce effects dangerous to civil society in a Protestant State. But, where they act upon low and uninformed minds, such as constitute the great mass of the Popish community in Ireland, by the complete ascendancy which they give to the Priests over their weak and deluded followers;—and by rendering them, in every respect, the active instruments of superstition and fanaticism, ready to be employed for any purpose, however daring and however desperate, they are pregnant with the most formidable dangers to the constitution, and cannot be too strictly watched, or too strongly guarded.

town of Castlecomer. A small party of the Waterford and Downshire Militia checked their progress for a while, in a most gallant manner. And, notwithstanding the immense superiority of numbers opposed to them, maintained their ground, till Sir Charles Asgill arrived to their assistance, with nine hundred men, of the garrison of Kilkenny, when a few discharges of grape shot drove the rebels from the place. Sir Charles then returned to Kilkenny, and all the Protestants of Castlecomer, expecting another attack, left their habitations, and took refuge in that town. Castlecomer was, of course, subjected to all those enormities which the rebels were accustomed to inflict on every place which they attacked. But a considerable body of Yeomanry, from the adjacent Queen's county, with the brave Colonel Pole at their head, advanced against them, compelled them to retreat, and pursued them with activity. Sir Charles Asgill, apprized of this, again marched out of Kilkenny, joined the Yeomanry, and both fell on this party of flying rebels, whom they routed with very great slaughter, and completely dispersed. Their General, father John Murphy, of Boulavogue, fled drunk from the field of battle, and was shortly after taken at Tullow, in the county of Carlow, and hanged. Another priest, of the same name,

who acted as his aid-de-camp, fell in the action All these transactions happened within a few days after the rout of the rebels at Vinegar-hill, on the 20th of June, 1798, and, from that time, it may justly be said, that the rebellion was extinguished; for, though* the party which fled into the Wicklow mountains was compelled, by hunger, to descend into the plains, and to make an inroad into the county of Meath, yet it was divided into small detached bodies, which were hunted from place to place by the Yeomanry, and speedily destroyed; very few of them escaping back to the mountains.*

Soon after the rebellion broke out, the British government, probably thinking it right that, during the confusion of a civil war, the military and civil power should be vested in the same hands, or rather, that a military Viceroy would be best adapted to the state of the country, recalled Earl Camden, whose wisdom and firmness had already given a death-blow to the rebellion, and sent Lord Cornwallis to succeed him. This last nobleman took with him full powers to grant a general pardon to the whole body of the rebels, with very few exceptions. He was sworn into office on the 20th of June, the very day on which the rebel-camp, on

* Duigenan's Fair Representation, &c. p. 92.

Vinegar-Hill, was stormed and carried. He was followed by several regiments of English militia, who arrived in time to assist the loyal Protestants of Ireland, who had successfully crushed the hydra of rebellion, to oppose the threatened invasion of the French.

Soon after his Lordship's arrival, the two Sheares's, and some other of the rebel leaders, were tried, convicted, and executed, at Dublin. Oliver Bond was also tried and condemned, but his forfeited life was spared by the lenity of government, and his punishment was commuted for perpetual banishment. The other rebel chiefs who were in prison, expecting to share the fate of their colleagues, interceded with Mr. Dobbs, a Barrister and Member of Parliament, to become their mediator with government. A conference was, in consequence, holden, between the Lord Chancellor Clare, Lord Castlereagh, and Mr. Edward Cooke, &c. the one side, and Messieurs Arthur O'Connor, Emmett, and Dr. M'Nevin, the rebel delegates, on the other. It was then agreed, that, on condition that the prisoners should disclose the whole of the conspiracy, including their correspondence and intercourse with the French government, their lives (to the number of seventy) should be spared, and they should have liberty to retire to any country, not at war with

Great Britain. As, however, they were found to abuse the lenity of government, by secretly labouring to revive the expiring flame of rebellion, it was deemed expedient to send twenty of the most refractory of them* into confinement, at Fort George, in Scotland, until a proper opportunity should occur for transporting them to the continent.

At length the moment, which had been so long and so anxiously expected by the rebels, arrived;—on the twenty-second of August, three French frigates appeared in the Bay of Killala, a small town in the county of Mayo, which is the residence of the Bishop; who had a very numerous company at his house, it being the time at which he held a visitation. When the troops landed from the frigates, they proved to be a French detachment of one thousand and seventy men, under the command of General Humbert, who brought with him between five and six thousand stand of arms, and a number

* The self-convicted traitors, who were conveyed to Fort George, were Samuel Neilson, Thomas Russell, Arthur O'Connor, Thomas Addis Emmet, William James M'Nevin, Matthew Dowling, John Sweetman, Joseph Cuthbert, Roger O'Connor, John Sweeny, Hugh Wilson, John Chambers, Joseph Cormick, Edward Hudson, George Cumming, William Dowdall, Robert Hunter, Robert Simms, William Tennant, and Steele Dickson, a Presbyterian Minister.

of uniforms, and military accoutrements. The General established his head-quarters at the episcopal palace, and was very soon joined by some thousands of the people in the neighbouring county, to whom he distributed arms and cloathes. He told the Bishop that he came to give liberty to the Irish, and to render them independent of England.

The joy of the rebels, however, at the long-expected arrival of their friends, was somewhat damped by the conduct of the latter. They imagined that the invaders would commence their career with the slaughter of the Protestants, and the destruction of their property; that the Popish religion would be immediately established with the utmost splendour on the ruins of the Established Church; and that the estates which had been forfeited in former rebellions would be restored to the families of their ancient proprietors. But their astonishment was great when they were informed by the French, that their object was to give them a new constitution, similar to that established in France; that they would not suffer any person to be persecuted for religious opinions; and that, as they considered both religions as ridiculous and absurd, they laughed at those who made them objects of contention.'

On Sunday, the twenty-sixth of August,

the main body of the French, accompanied by a great number of the rebels, marched to Ballina, having left behind them a detachment of two hundred men, to guard their ammunition, and secure their retreat.* From Ballina they proceeded towards Castlebar, where Major-general Hutchinson commanded. He had with

* Several Popish priests, and among others, Father Thomas Munnelly, of the Backs, and curate to the parish of the Popish Bishop, Bellew, and Father Sweeney, offered their services to the French soon after they landed. The latter said to the French officers, "as every thing belonging to the Protestants will be confiscated, I should be obliged to Monsieur Charost to let me have the Bishop's library, as I am fond of reading;" but Charost, turning from him with a look of contempt, answered—"The Bishop's library is as much his own now as ever it was." *A narrative of what passed at Killala, in the county of Mayo, and the parts adjacent, during the French invasion in the summer of* 1798. By the Bishop of Killala, p. 98. Sweeney was afterwards hanged; but Munnelly availed himself of the proclamation, and escaped. Father Dease, a priest, having been engaged in recruiting for the French, in the county of Sligo, was taken prisoner by a gentleman in the neighbourhood. He was on the point of being hanged, when Captain Ormsby, of the Tireragh Yeoman cavalry, came up, and consented to spare his life, on a promise of revealing all he knew. He then declared, what he afterwards solemnly and deliberately confirmed by his oath before a magistrate, that Dr. Bellew, the titular Bishop of the diocese, encouraged his clergy, at a general meeting, to rise on the present occasion; and that it was at his instigation they were so active in assisting the French. *Musgrave's Memoirs*, p. 608.

him, the Kilkenny, and part of the Longford regiments of militia, a small portion of the 6th regiment of foot, a part of the 6th dragoon guards, and a few Yeomen and Fencibles. After a sharp action, which lasted some time, the infantry gave way, and the French remained masters of the field. They left Castlebar on the fourth of September, and directed their march to Sligo. When they reached Coloony, a village about five miles distant from that town, they were attacked by Colonel Vereker, with a detachment of the city of Limerick militia, and a few Yeomen, not exceeding, in the whole, two hundred and eighty-six men, and two curricle guns. The French had, at this time, about nine hundred men, besides two hundred and fifty deserters from the Longford and Kilkenny militia. Colonel Vereker had taken an advantageous post, and, for upwards of an hour and a half, gallantly maintained it against such a superior force. The French had twenty-eight men killed, and a great many wounded. This check induced them to forego their design upon Sligo, and to take the road to Drumahair.

Lord Cornwallis meanwhile had left Dublin, and, with Lieutenant-General Lake, advanced in pursuit of the French. On the night of the seventh of September, the latter, with his divi-

sion, reached Ballintogher, between Drumahair and Coloony. He overtook the French the next day, at Ballynaninck, where their commander, Sarrasin, surrendered; and, after a short action, the whole of the French army, under General Humbert, laid down their arms. The French Generals, indeed, had very soon perceived that they had a hopeless task to perform, and they loaded the United Irishmen with execrations, for having invited them to undertake a fruitless expedition. They displayed the greatest contempt for the bigotry of the common Irish papists, and were amazed to hear them say, that they came to take arms for them, and their blessed Virgin. Mr. Charost told the Bishop of Killala, "that they had just driven the Pope out of Italy, and did not expect to find him so suddenly in Ireland."

When the French changed their route from Coloony towards the metropolis, the most active exertions were used in all the intervening counties, Leitrim, Longford, Monaghan, Roscommon, Cavan, Westmeath, and Meath, to raise the mass of the people to join them; and some great and alarming movements were observed among the disaffected, even in Dublin and its vicinity.* And, had the French arrived

* *Musgrave's Memoirs*, p. 613.

three months sooner, or had they brought with them, even at this period, a much more considerable force, though they might have been ultimately defeated, they would have occasioned a vast effusion of blood, and have exposed the country to the most imminent danger. It must be mentioned to the credit of the French officers, that they conducted themselves, while in Ireland, with the greatest propriety and moderation; and exerted themselves to the utmost to check the savage ferocity of the Irish rebels. Detached bodies of the rebels were dispersed by the Royal army, after the surrender of their allies, and, in a few days, an end was put to this formidable rebellion, which, had it been conducted with the same spirit, energy, and skill, with which it had been planned, would have destroyed every vestige of social order, and have established the most sanguinary despotism on the ruins of that rational and well-regulated freedom, which invariably flows from a British constitution, and a Protestant church.

On the 27th of October, however, the same frigates which had brought over Humbert's army, having once more eluded the vigilance of our cruizers, again appeared in Killala Bay, with a reinforcement of two

thousand men. But, having received information of the near approach of a British squadron, they slipped their cables, and returned to France.

CHAPTER XLI.

French Affairs—Farther Revolutionary projects of the Directory—Plan for subverting the constitution of Switzerland—Hypocrisy and ambition of the French government—Their present plans perfectly conformable with the avowed system of the Brissotines—Memorable report of Brissot to the Convention—Happy state of the Swiss—Stability of their government—Favourable to civil liberty—Means adopted by the Directory for producing a revolution in Switzerland—Determined neutrality of the Swiss—Dissentions among them—Patriotic conduct of the Avoyer Steiguer—Effect of disappointed ambition on Frisching, a magistrate of Berne—Attempts of the French to provoke the Swiss to violate their neutrality—They depart from their neutral system, to favour the escape of the French troops from Germany—Insurrection in the Pays de Vaud excited by the emissaries of the Directory—A Swiss army sent to suppress it—Command of the troops intrusted to General Weiss, a philosopher of the new school—His cowardly conduct—He flatters the rebels whom he was sent to subdue—He retreats and resigns his command—Vain efforts of the Swiss patriots, Steiguer, D'Erlach, and De Grosse, to rouse the government to a sense of their duty—Proclamation of the French General, Brune, on entering Switzerland—Declares the object of the Directory to be the punishment of usurpers, and the restoration of popular rights—A tool of despotism, preaching liberty—

The Directory insist on the dismission of Mr. Wickham, the British minister at Berne—Mr. Wickham recalled—Seizure of the bishoprick of Basil by the French—Extensive resources of the Swiss at this period—Fully adequate to the defence of their liberties—Proclamation of the French Commissary Mengaud—Weakness and incapacity of the government of Berne—The Senate change the constitution, and adopt a more democratic form of government—Other Cantons imitate their example—Steiguer quits the Senate and repairs to the Army—The French Army advances—They render the Swiss troops mistrustful of their Officers—Forge letters to prove D'Erlach a traitor —Cowardice of such conduct—Truce between the French and Swiss—Treacherously broken by Brune—Infamous summons sent by the French General Schauenbourg to the garrison of Soleure—Order issued by the government, for arming the people—Fribourg and Soleure taken by the French—Battle of Fraubrunnen—D'Erlach murdered by his troops—Gallant stand made by Steiguer—Berne falls—Bravery displayed by the Swiss women and girls—Numbers of them killed in battle—Buonaparte abuses the government of Berne for protecting Mallet du Pan—Threatens to *democratize* England in three months—The criminals in the gaols refuse to receive liberty from the French—Brune puzzled in framing a new constitution for Switzerland—Proclaims "*The Helvetic Republic one and indivisible.*"—This union resisted by the democratic cantons—They appeal in vain to the Directory—The new government put in action—The Swiss Directory and Legislative Body assemble at Arau—Disgust of the people—Impolitic conduct of the smaller cantons—Want of union among them—Conclude a treaty with the French commander—The treaty disapproved by the Directory at Paris—The French exercise sovereign power in Switzerland—Schauenbourg attacks the canton of Underwald—Desperate action at

Stanz—Signal bravery of the inhabitants—Loss on both sides — Barbarity of the French — Final reduction of Switzerland — Congress at Rastadt — Artifice of the French for protracting the negotiations—The regicide, Jean de Bry, one of their plenipotentiaries—Claims and designs of the Directory—Attempt of Bernadotte, the French ambassador, to excite an insurrection at Vienna—He displays the tri-coloured flag—His house surrounded by the populace—He threatens the people—They attack his house, pull down the flag and destroy it—Bernadotte leaves Vienna—New revolution produced by the French in the Cisalpine Republic—They destroy the *unperishable* constitution established by themselves, on the exact model of their own—Their agent Trouvè, a writer in the Moniteur, employed to compose a new constitution for the Cisalpines—The opposition committed to prison—A new Directory formed—The most respectable member the keeper of a public brothel—That country becomes a province of France—French resolve to *revolutionize* Rome—Joseph Buonaparté sent thither for the purpose—He insists on the release of all persons confined for treason and sedition—He excites public tumults—The French General Duphot killed in one of them—Joseph leaves Rome—The Pope offers to avert the vengeance of France by any concessions which the Directory may dictate—Imprecates the divine assistance, by public processions, penance, and prayer—Joseph Buonaparté's cowardly abuse of the Pope—Berthier leads a French army to Rome—Engages to respect the government, and to protect property—Declares his sole object to be the punishment of the persons who killed Duphot—The Pope forbids his subjects to resist the French—The French enter Rome without opposition—They destroy the papal government, and erect a "*Roman Republic*," founded on the *Sovereignty of the People*—The Pope sent from Rome—The Vatican stripped—A

general plunder takes place—Seven Consuls appointed—The inhabitants are pillaged and impoverished—Dreadful effects of this Revolution described by a Republican author—Horrible proposition made by a member of the new Jacobin Club at Rome—Priests made responsible for the peace of their districts—The French Directory again change the constitution of the Batavian Republic—Secure the citadel of Turin, and make the King of Sardinia a prisoner in his capital—An expedition sails from Toulon under the command of Buonaparté—Malta surrendered to the French by the treachery of the Knights—A British squadron, under Admiral Nelson, enters the Mediterranean in pursuit of the French—Arrives at Alexandria before them—Sails to Sicily—French land at Alexandria and take the city by storm—Nelson returns to Egypt—Battle of the Nile—Destruction of the French Fleet—Buonaparté marches to Cairo—Defeats the Mamelukes—Takes Cairo—His communication with Europe cut off—British expedition to Ostend—The troops destroy the sluices of the canal of Bruges—Are surrounded and taken by the French.

[1798-1799.]—While the flame of rebellion had raged with such violence as to threaten the dismemberment of the empire, the most implacable enemies of Great Britain had, by projecting a fatal blow at her distant possessions, prepared for *her* more splendid triumphs, than she had yet achieved; and for *themselves* more signal disasters than they had yet sustained. By this time the French Republic had not only extended her power, but had obtained

the means of consolidating and securing what she had acquired, had it been compatible with the genius of the Republic to remain satisfied, while there was a power to reduce, a nation to revolutionize, or a throne to subvert. Relieved from her most powerful continental opponent by the treaty of Campo-Formio, by which the Emperor of Germany had lent his sanction to all their schemes of plunder, and all their plans of conquest, the Directory had now leisure to attend to the execution of other revolutionary projects, which the founders of the Republic had conceived, and which all their successors determined to carry into effect, whenever a favourable opportunity should occur. Switzerland, the cradle of liberty, the seat of pure unadulterated freedom, whose sons exhibited a simplicity of manners, a dignified virtue, and an heroic spirit, which formed a striking contrast with the nations around them, was the first victim which the philanthropic governors of France determined to reduce to an equality of misery with the wretched slaves whom they had subjected to their tyranny at home. 'Twas true, indeed, that hitherto they had constantly represented the Swiss as *their good neighbours* and *dear allies*; 'twas true, that they were bound to them by solemn treaties, recently concluded, and rigidly observed, by the Swiss;—

but these were no obstacles to men, who suffered no considerations of honour, no regard for good faith, to interfere with the gratification of their ambition. Their system of political morality had, at an early period of the revolution, been clearly defined and established by their progenitor, Brissot, whose friends now enjoyed an ascendancy in the councils of the Luxembourg. In the memorable report of that demagogue, on the 22d of November, 1792, on the Convention concluded by the republican General, Montesquieu, with the people of Geneva, he observed, "Brevity and clearness ought to mark our style; Geneva shall obtain no other treaty than the communication of French principles. It is for you to examine, whether a free people *can, and ought to be bound by treaties;* whether treaties, with any power that does not hold its power of the people, be not *indecent*, for *this*, perhaps, *is the grand secret of our revolution*, and *of the revolutions which are preparing*." Here was a clear and explicit avowal, made officially by the chairman of a committee of the Convention to the Convention itself, almost immediately after the passing those memorable decrees, which held out a direct invitation to rebel, to all the people of Europe, and evidently growing out of the same principles, that it was the object and the policy of this new-

born republic to regard no treaties, but to systematize that outrageous dishonesty, duplicity, and infidelity, that breach of good faith, and that violation of treaties, at the call of interest or ambition, with which the Carthaginians were so bitterly reproached by the Romans. True to this maxim, the Directory regarded the treaty with Switzerland as binding only so long as it suited their views to observe it. It had been particularly serviceable to them while they were at war with Austria, but now it interfered with their further schemes of conquest, which they had leisure to execute. Of course, the Swiss were no longer their *good friends and allies*, but perfidious neighbours, odious *aristocrats*, enemies to the revolution, and foes to liberty!

For the greater part of three centuries had this happy people lived, as it were, in a state of seclusion from the rest of Europe; in the bosom of their mountains, they preserved a patriarchal simplicity of manners, and, rejecting those factitious wants which luxury creates, they had within themselves the sources of comfort, prosperity, and happiness, which they diligently improved, while, strangers to war, they were passive spectators of the deadly feuds, and destructive broils, of the neighbouring powers. Their government, simple in its constitution, and admirably adapted to the genius of the people,

had exhibited a degree of firmness and stability, which enabled it to remain unshaken, amidst the shocks of contending nations, and the revolution of empires. It is a striking fact, that none of the Swiss governments had experienced any variation *in their essence* from their first establishment; excepting only, perhaps, an alteration in favour of *political equality*, (of which the French proclaimed themselves the universal patrons!) as, every where the nobility had lost their primitive advantages; and the *citizens* every where exceeded the *knights*, in numbers, influence, and power. Formed by cities rather than by provinces, the communities which held under the empire acquired Sovereignty when they obtained independence. Their municipal regulations were then converted into a public constitution, and the corporation, composed of the inhabitants of the city, formed the *Patriciate*, and the Sovereign Council.

By arms, by treaties, by purchase, or by concessions, these infant states acquired a new territory, or extended their original domain; and all such acquisitions were made at the expence of Princes or of powerful Barons. It was by the valour and the skill of her gentlemen and principal citizens, that Switzerland threw off her feudal dependance upon Germany,

and all its concomitant oppressions. The subjects of the different cantons to whom the philosophic legislators of regenerated France professed a determination to restore their *primitive* freedom, and *the rights of their ancestors*, would, in the event of such *regeneration*, become *serfs* again; restored to their primitive condition, they would become the slavish vassals of despotic lords, without security for either their liberty, or their lives. A hundred districts now subjected to the Swiss government were indebted to that subjection for the freedom which they enjoyed. The immunities which any province possessed, previous to its incorporation with one of the cantons, was carefully preserved. If slaves, they were emancipated; if free, they retained their privileges;—such was, universally, the spirit of the treaty which *de facto* and *de jure*, gave them new Sovereigns.*—These remarks apply equally to the Pays de Vaud, and to the aristocratic canton of Berne, as to the more popular and democratic cantons.

The Republican government of France, to whom this state of things, in a neighbouring

* *Historical Essay on the dissolution of the Helvetic League, and the destruction of Helvetic Liberty.* By Mallet du Pan.

country, was a standing reproach, exerted every art to destroy it. While the most vague, false, and ridiculous charges were, occasionally, preferred against the Swiss, the usual instruments of revolution, Jacobinical emissaries, were employed, demon like, to excite jealousy, where harmony alone had hitherto prevailed, and to stir up discontent in the very seat of happiness. But though a revolutionary club, composed of outcasts and vagabonds from Switzerland, had been established at Paris, under the protection of the Constituent Assembly, and of certain natives of the Pays de Vaud, yet the first efforts to propagate the new principles in that country proved abortive; and a partial disturbance, raised by the disaffected, was speedily suppressed by the active vigilance of the magistrates, assisted by the marked disapprobation of the inhabitants in general. But the avowed determination of the Swiss government not to be diverted from their rigid system of neutrality, (adopted without a sufficient attention to its consequences, or to the peculiar circumstances of the times) by injuries however grave, by insults however pointed,—a determination to which they were exhorted most earnestly to adhere, by the mistaken, and often ill-directed, humanity and benevolence of Louis the Sixteenth, operated as an encouragement to the

jacobins of France to persevere in their unprincipled efforts. By their exertions, assisted by Mr. Barthelemi, the French Ambassador, dissentions were produced among the principal persons in the country. The chief magistrate, the virtuous, and truly enlightened, Steiguer, became an object of suspicion and attack to a faction, which chose for its leader M. Frisching, a magistrate of Berne, no less attached, than Steiguer himself, to the constitution of his country, and distinguished by his eloquence, his knowledge, and capacity. But, incensed at being reduced to play a second part on the political stage; inflamed with resentment, animosity, and jealousy, against the state; and irritated at seeing another in possession of a dignity to which he aspired himself; he suffered his ambition to subdue his patriotism; his passions to prevail over his reason; and, melancholy instance of human weakness, resolved rather to let the republic perish, than suffer it to be saved by his rival!

So far were the Swiss from departing from their neutrality in prejudice to the French, their desire to deprive the French of all possible pretext to prefer such a charge against them, had led them to commit a breach of that neutrality to the prejudice of the Austrians, when at war with France. When the victorious Archduke

had wrested from Moreau the spoils of victory, and had compelled him to retrace his steps through the country, which his army had desolated, the republican hordes, hard pressed by the Austrians, and by the peasantry of Suabia, on whom they had exercised the most wanton cruelty, and the most rapacious extortion, were forced to fall back upon Switzerland, and were reduced to the necessity of either surrendering at discretion, or of seeking to escape by violating the neutrality of the Swiss, the Helvetic territory was suffered, without opposition, to be overrun by these *soldiers of liberty*, these *citizen-soldiers*, these *protectors of the poor*, whose rapacity had not spared a single cottage. For twelve successive days, Switzerland patiently submitted to tolerate these bands of fugitives, to supply them with provisions, and to escort their baggage waggons, in which their arms, and the fruits of their plunder, were confusedly mixed with the sick and the wounded. The pretended baggage of this hideous procession consisted of the wardrobes, beds, golden-crosses, and shoe-buckles, of the female villagers of Suabia; and of articles of every description which they had stolen from the gentlemens' seats, from the Churches, monasteries, and villages. In vain did the imperial general, de la Tour, complain to the Swiss government of

their conduct; his complaints were disregarded, and the directorial army were suffered to escape with their booty.

This departure from *neutral* justice originated in the same motive which, unhappily, influenced all the proceedings of the Swiss government, at this period, and which defeated all the views and designs of those true patriots whose efforts were invariably directed to preserve their country from destruction. This was a fatal desire to avert the wrath of the Directory by conciliatory measures; that is, by mean and unworthy sacrifices; by clogging the wheels of government at the very time when it was necessary to increase their velocity; and by the adoption of revolutionary proceedings, at a moment when it was the peculiar duty of the government to encourage, in the great body of the people, that marked aversion from revolutionary principles, which they had, with very few exceptions, manifested.

The Directory succeeded, by their emissaries, in producing an insurrection in the Pays de Vaud, and they sent one of their ruffian Generals, Menard, at the beginning of 1798, with a body of troops, to the assistance of their allies, the insurgents. The Swiss government assembled, with expedition, a formidable body of troops; but, by a strange infatuation, they

gave the command of this army to General Weiss, a philosopher of the new school, who, without any fixed principles, and even without wishing to see the effects of the French revolution extended to his native country, had courted and praised every regicide from Brissot to Buonaparté. Entrusted with full powers, having orders to act with promptness and decision; provided with a force of twenty thousand men, an ample train of artillery, and a sufficient supply of military stores, while sixty thousand loyal inhabitants were ready to join him, in the persuasion that the influence of his name, his pamphlets, and his philosophy, would subdue the rebels without firing a musquet; he remained a whole week in a state of inactivity; suffered a revolutionary committee to sit in the very place in which he had fixed his quarters; entered into a parley with the members; and when, encouraged by his conduct, they formed a plan for seizing the Castle of Lausanne, instead of securing their persons, as it was his duty to do, he contented himself with apprizing them, that such an attempt would be an act of high treason, for which they must answer with their heads. As if fearful of intimidating these rebels too much, he addressed them, in the soothing language of fraternal friendship. — "Such a measure, gentlemen,"

said this prating General, " would be perfectly impotent in advancing your interests; and, considered merely as it would affect yourselves, it would, in no degree, counterbalance the consequences which might ensue. I invite you, *most amicably*, to judge of me by my *known principles*, and by a long series of proceedings, which have gained me *the confidence of different parties*, and even *the marked good wishes of that external authority* whose favour you now solicit." From such a commander what could be expected? Nothing but the disgrace which ensued. Determined not to fight the French, and not daring to punish the insurgents, he first retreated, and afterwards deserted, his post, and resigned his command without orders, and without permission. It would seem that the same spirit had infected the government of Berne. For, notwithstanding the sage admonitions, and patriotic remonstrances, of the venerable Steiguer, of the gallant D'Erlach, the intelligent De Grosse, (the intrepid defender of the Dutch fortress of Grave, in the winter of 1796) and of some other magistrates and officers of superior understanding and of determined minds, the majority of the government ultimately imitated the example of Weiss. Wavering, indecisive, and timid, they suffered the French to delude them by their professions, while they invaded the

country with their arms. If their native spirit returned for a moment, and led to the adoption of some wise and vigorous resolution, it was soon suffered to evaporate, and the offspring which it produced was crushed at its birth.

On the 28th of February, the French General, Brune, (who was a printer before the revolution, and one of the most active of the jacobins during its progress) published a proclamation, addressed to the people of Switzerland, exhibiting the usual mixture of revolutionary cant and hypocritical falsehoods. "My brave soldiers," said this tool of the Directory, "are your friends, your brethren; their sole desire, in punishing tyranny, is to assist you in the destruction of its impious yoke. Amidst the crimes of your oligarchy, I expected some returns to reason, *some symptoms of remorse.* Neither *ambition* nor *cupidity* shall dishonour our proceedings; my only object in entering your country is to punish the guilty usurpers of your sovereignty. Dismiss all alarm for *your personal safety, your property, your religious worship,* and *your political independence.** These

* This army of *butchers* maintained the *personal safety* of the Swiss by murdering men, women, and children; and defended *their property* by the indiscriminate plunder of rich and poor. A person, (known to M. Mallet du Pan) who had

are all GUARANTEED TO YOU by the French government. Be free, the French Republic exhorts you, nature orders you, to be free."

Before this period, the French government, who had exerted every effort to provoke the Swiss to some act *committed*, or *omitted*, which might afford them something like a pretext for the commencement of hostilities, had, in direct violation of that independence which they professed to respect, insisted, in a dictatorial manner, on the dismission of Mr. Wickham, the British envoy.—But before the Swiss government had time to decide, Mr. Wickham received his letters of recal, and accordingly left the country; to the great disappointment of the Directory. Emboldened, however, by repeated instances of base submission to their will, the Directory ordered their agents to demand the release of all the criminals who had been imprisoned or banished on a charge of sedition, or conspiracy, the expulsion of the emigrants, and the renunciation of all military orders, which the Swiss officers had received from the King of France.—These demands, to the eternal disgrace

been robbed by this army, complained to the commanding officer of the place, who expressed his astonishment at finding that he had a coat left to his back. "If" (said he) "the theft had been committed by my soldiers, they would have left you nothing but your shirt."

of the government, met with instant compliance. The French, finding this means of provocation could not avail them, had next recourse to a direct act of hostility by seizing the bishopric of Basil, in violation of the treaty of 1792, by which the independence and neutrality of that canton were expressly guaranteed.

It must not be suppposed that this weakness, on the part of the Swiss government, in neglecting to vindicate the wounded honour, and to avenge the injured interests, of their country, arose from any want of the means for opposing a successful resistance to the French Republic. Switzerland contained a people of soldiers, a great number of experienced officers, well-stored arsenals, and formidable posts; Berne, alone, had at her disposal an army of 35,000 men, embodied, disciplined, and brave; her magazines were full; her treasury was equal to the support of her army for several months; it was in the power of the league to double that force; and, had they sustained any defeats, the impenetrable retreats which the country afforded would have supplied fresh means of resistance. Corn might have been drawn from Germany; the government were certain of obtaining subsidies to enable them to continue the war; they would have fixed the resolution of the German empire; and the Emperor would have been

interested in assisting a valuable neighbour against the enemies of his crown and people.—This atrocious aggression, repelled with the energy of despair, might have given an impulse to all Europe; the first advantage obtained by the Swiss would have opened to them a frontier, wholly unprovided with fortified towns. At every step they advanced on the territory of France, after passing that frontier, they would have found, in the adjacent departments, inhabitants impressed with hatred for their oppressors, mindful of their injuries, and anxious to shake off their yoke. From Besançon to Lyon, and from Lyon to the shores of the Mediterranean, they would have raised a conflagration still more dreadful than that which had raged with so much fury in La Vendée. These resources were exhibited to the public, but without effect; the majority of the government were less anxious to devise means for supporting the war, than pretexts for evading it.*

Mengaud, the French Commissary, specially appointed to superintend and systematize the plunder of this devoted country, anxious to follow the example of the general, published a rhodomontade much in the same style.—He admitted, however, with more candour than Le

* Mallet Du Pan's Historical Essay, &c.

Brune had displayed, that he was an object of hatred to the Swiss, but he expressed his resolution to address them, *in the language of reason and truth!* his notions of which seem to have been perfectly congenial with those of M. Le Brune. "To regenerate Switzerland," said the revolutionary logician, "is not to disturb her repose. Who are base enough to tarnish the glory of the French armies? Is there any man, in the whole world, except the government of Berne and their adherents, who does not acknowledge their generosity, which is equal to their valour. Do not take up arms against them; they are brothers who join you in resisting the common enemy. Theirs *will not be chance blows;* they will not fall upon *the deluded citizen*, upon the *peaceable farmer*. The French army will be terrible only to the few perverse rulers who persist in the display of their phrenetic rage. Do you wish for war, when we offer you peace?".

Instead of being roused to a sense of duty, and to exertions of vigour, by the repeated outrages of the French, the Swiss government continued to manifest the most contemptible weakness and incapacity which ever disgraced the councils of a State. Adopting the very measures of *conciliation* and *concession*, which the Opposition in this country had pressed the British Cabinet to adopt, in respect of the

Irish rebels, they made the vain attempt to prevent a *revolution* by a *radical reform*; in other words, they made the revolution themselves. After an *amicable* conference with the enemy, the Senate of Berne, by the assumption of an authority which it did not possess, passed a sentence of annihilation on the existing constitution which it changed into, a species of democracy, possessing neither strength nor stability; and an example, at once so foolish and so absurd, was immediately followed by the governments of the cantons of Zurich, Lucerne, Soleure, and Schauffhausen. In the three last of these places, the people, more wise and more enlightened than their rulers, endeavoured to prevent this senseless act of political suicide, committed in the true spirit of cowardice, in order to avert a blow which they wanted courage to repel.

The venerable Steiguer, having in vain endeavoured, in his civil capacity, to stem the fatal torrent which threatened to overwhelm the land of his fathers, reproached the Senate, as the agents of corruption, or the slaves of cowardice, and repaired to the army, firmly resolved to save his country, or to perish with her.

Meanwhile the French troops continued to advance into the heart of the country, and the

most seditious and inflammatory hand-bills were circulated among the Swiss soldiery; the object of which was to inspire them with distrust of their officers, and to weaken them by dissentions. The French had even the baseness to fabricate letters, purporting to be written by General D'Erlach, in which that officer promised to betray his men, and to occasion their defeat.* It is worthy of remark, that these *invincible heroes* of the *great nation*, as they styled themselves, whose *humanity* was equal to their *valour*, never dared to meet the brave Swiss fairly in the field, nor to encounter them but with superior numbers.

Brune, not having yet received his expected reinforcements, nor sufficiently diffused his jacobinical poison, had contrived to amuse the new regency of Berne with proposals for a negotiation; and to obtain the consent of these pusillanimous or corrupt betrayers of their country to a truce for fifteen days, which was to expire on the morning of the *fourth* of March. In the mean time, another French General, Schauenbourg, had entered Switzerland, with 22,000 men, which he brought with him from the Rhine. Having, at length, completed their military arrangements,

* Mallet du Pan, ubi Supra.

these two minions of the Directory, as if resolved to prove themselves worthy of the confidence of such masters, basely determined to attack the Swiss *before the expiration of the truce.* Accordingly, in the night of the *first* of March, Schauenbourg assailed some of the outposts, which, though thus taken by surprize, were long most gallantly defended by seven hundred and fifty mountaineers of Oberland, against seven thousand eight hundred disciplined troops of France. After murdering a number of female peasants, the leader of this banditti pushed forward to Soleure, and sent to the garrison a summons which has been justly characterized as an unparalleled model of savage ferocity. It is, indeed, scarcely to be conceived, that a man, who had been born a gentleman, and bred up in the school for honour, (for Schauenbourg was a major in the French army under the Monarchy) could so far forget the principles which he had imbibed in his youth, as to disgrace both his birth and his education, by subscribing his name to such an atrocious composition. " The Executive Directory," said he, " has ordered me to take possession of Soleure, and to apprize you that, if I experience the smallest resistance; if a single drop of blood be shed, the members of the government of Soleure will answer for it with their lives and property; and

I shall inflict the most signal, and the most inexorable, justice; make known *the will of the Directory* to the Members of your Government; I give you *half an hour* to come to a decision; when that time shall have expired, I shall burn the city, and put the garrison to the sword." It was in this style of a Tartar inflicting chastisement on his rebellious slaves, observed one who had studied the character and genius of the French Revolution, its founders, and agents, more deeply, and more successfully, than any of his contemporaries, that the Directory, and their Janissaries, treated a nation of freemen, their neutral neighbours, their allies! It was thus that philosophy respected the laws of war, the laws of humanity, and the laws of nations, by threatening to massacre peaceable republicans on the smoking ruins of their habitations in case they should dare to defend themselves! The Swiss government, the seat of which exhibited every symptom of anarchy and weakness, at last, issued an order, which, a week sooner, had sufficed to save the country, for arming the whole population of the country, by the levy of the *Landsthurm*. But the imbecility of this wretched government still prevailed over the patriotic resolution of the people; they knew not how to employ the resources with which they were now supplied in abundance; and,

as usual, activity, zeal, and energy, in a bad cause, triumphed over indolence, hesitation, and half-measures, displayed in a good cause. The French pressed forward with eagerness; Fribourg, and Soleure, soon fell into their hands. —A desperate, but irregular, resistance was, indeed, made at different places, particularly at Fraubrunnen, at Ulteren, and at Granholz; but it proved ineffectual. The troops being disheartened by mistrust, weakened by divisions, and oppressed by an immense superiority of numbers, iniquity prevailed, and virtue sunk in the conflict. The malignant genius of regicidal France triumphed, and the liberties of Switzerland were destroyed. On the sixth of March, Berne surrendered by capitulation.— On the day preceding the fall of Berne, the Swiss met the French at the village of Fraubrunnen, nine miles from the capital. The Swiss were commanded by the Avoyer Steiguer D'Erlach, the most steady friend of his country, with his guards, and four Colonels, having been murdered by the people, who had been taught, by the infamous machinations of the French, to believe them faithless to their trust, and traitors to the State. The venerable Steiguer, at the age of seventy, decorated with the great order of the Black Eagle, but still more adorned by his virtues, now led his

countrymen to battle. The action was obstinate and bloody; but the superiority of the French cavalry, and light artillery, decided the fate of the day. The Bernese retreated three miles, and renewed the action. No sooner had they been driven from one position, than they took up another; and it was not till after five successive engagements that, on the evening of the fifth of March, the enemy arrived under the walls of Berne, leaving the road strewed with the bodies of the victors and of the vanquished. A gallant band of youths, who, revered the virtues, and partook of the sentiments, of their venerable commander, followed him to the field. They fought, as men so animated, by the double stimulus of patriotism and friendship, might be expected to fight. Though several of them had not reached their sixteenth year, their cause gave them courage, and their spirit strength, far beyond their age. They fought around their chief, and, bravely refusing quarter, fell with their swords wreaking with the blood of the enemies and tyrants of their country. It is over the tombs of such heroes as these, and not over the bier of a Montgomery, the prison of a La Fayette, or the scaffold of a Despard, that the tear of genuine patriotism will fall.—Sacred be the memory of these generous youths;—to them let true patri-

ots of every soil look up as a fit model and a bright example, while the historic muse transmits their public virtues and gallant deeds to future ages.

" O fortunati *omnes!* si quid mea carmina possint."

The wreck of the Bernese army reached the mountains of Emmenthal. Steiguer having effected his escape retired into the interior of Austria. He afterwards repaired to Berlin, in the hope of inducing the King of Prussia to stand forward in defence of his persecuted country. In these patriotic efforts, however, he unfortunately failed.—At a subsequent period he joined the Russian army under Korsakow, when it entered Switzerland, and having witnessed this last vain effort to rescue his native land from slavery and oppression, he retired to Augsburgh, and there died of a broken heart.*

* It is lamentable to observe the extreme carelessness, and inattention, displayed, by English writers, in their relation of historical facts, occurring in foreign countries. In a *second* edition of the Annual Register for 1798, printed in 1806, (and published for Ottridge and Co.) it is stated, alluding to the action of March the 5th.—" In this battle perished, among other brave patriots, the Illustrious Steiguer; he fell, as he often declared it to be his determination, fighting against France, for the liberty of Switzerland." P. 31. Yet, early in 1798, a publication, translated from the French, appeared in London, entitled, " A Short Account of the Invasion of Switzerland, by the French, in a Letter from

Amidst the last agonies of expiring freedom, some genuine sparks of true Helvetic spirit, some distinctive traits of noble heroism, besides those just noticed, appeared worthy to be recorded in history.

Upwards of eight hundred women took up arms in the *Landsthurm*, or general levy, and bore all the fire of the enemy in the last actions. At *Fraubrunnen* two hundred and sixty women and girls received the enemy with scythes, pitchforks, and pickaxes; one hundred and eighty were killed; and one of them, whose name was *Glar*, had two daughters, and three grand daughters, who fought by her side.—These six heroines all perished. The same scene was displayed at Newenegg, Laupen, and Lengnau. In the battalion of Oberland, which defended the last of these places, a father was seen fighting in company with three of his sons, and seven of his grandsons, all of whom lost their lives.

Effingner, a member of the Senate, an old man of seventy, joined the army, in the evening of the fourth of March, with his sword in his hand, and a brace of pistols in his belt;

M. Mallet du Pan, to M. De M * * * * *;" in which Mr. Steiguer's escape into Germany was mentioned. Besides it might have been ascertained by a reference to any of the foreign accounts of the Invasion of Switzerland.

he led a company of grenadiers into battle, was wounded, taken prisoner, and expired, a few days after, in a military hospital at *Soleure*, in which *Schauenbourg* had the baseness to confine him, in the midst of dying, and dead, soldiers. Another Senator, Mr. *Herbert*, blew his brains out with a pistol, rather than survive the ruin of the State.

A young peasant, of Avenche, aged twenty, was threatened to be put to death by the French, unless he would take up arms against his Sovereign. He firmly refused to become a rebel, and had the boldness to add to his refusal, that *Buonaparté*, in crossing Switzerland,* had occasioned all the misfortunes of

* M. Mallet du Pan, having exposed the infamous conduct of Buonaparté in Italy, by the publication of facts, which the Republican General never dared to deny; the latter abused the Government of *Berne* for affording him protection; and, in order to avert the rage of this man, an *illegal* sentence of banishment was pronounced, by the Secret Council, against the best friend, and most strenuous defender, of the country. This scandalous proceeding, however, had not the desired effect. At the end of 1797, Buonaparté crossed Switzerland, on his way to Rastadt. Before he left Milan, he had, on the 11th of November, told the Grisons, in answer to their timid complaints, on the incorporation of the Valtaline with the Cisalpine Republic:—"The French Republic will afford you her protection, so long as you shall conduct yourself towards her with those attentions which are due to the most powerful

the country. He had no sooner said this, than he was carried to the place of execution,

people in Europe." He did not, however, in the course of this journey, display the benevolence of a protector, but the airs of a morose and malignant despot. Every word he uttered was either a boast or an insult. At Geneva, he declared that '*he would democratize England in three months.*' The Senate of Berne had prepared honours, a ball, deputations, and a change of horses, for him; he rejected them all with proud disdain, leaving nothing on his way but marks of ill-humour and contempt. Some few prostitutes and *sans culottes*, who presented him with flowers, and compliments, at Lausanne, were the only persons whom he deemed deserving of his attention.

But at Basil he changed his tone. A fellow of the name of *Dufour*, who had become a General, and a Commander, at Huninguen, addressed him in the following terms: --- "I will not compare you to the Turennes, and the Montecuculis, you have surpassed them; but I will exclaim, with all Republicans, Buonaparté is the first man in the world!"--- One *Buxtorf*, a burgomaster, who shone equally as an orator as he did as a politician, even improved on the eloquence of Dufour.---"The laurel of Victory immortalizes the hero!"--- said he to Buonaparté.---"By serving liberty, your blessings extend even to us. It is not, then, admiration that forms the object of our mission, *it is gratitude.* You must have read, in every face in Switzerland, that expression of content which is the reward of so much uneasiness;---you will sign the happiness of Switzerland at Rastadt." This miserable stupidity intoxicated the hero, who sententiously declared, that there existed only two Republics in Switzerland---Geneva without laws, and Basil converted into a counting-house, and workshop, for the revolution. Mallet du Pan, from whose Historical Essay these observations were taken, thus delineating,

and shot, without having deigned to solicit forgiveness.

with the pencil of truth, the character of Buonaparté, while pronouncing, on the ruins of Genoa and Venice, sentence on all neutral States, divulged, to Europe, the mysteries of the Luxembourg. Such audacity, united with such perfidy, and hypocrisy so base, combined with usurpations so daring, proclaimed the dissolution of every social system.---A revolutionist from passion, a conqueror by subornation, unjust from instinct, outrageous in victory, mercenary in his protection;---an inexorable despoiler bribed by the victims whose credulity he betrayed;---as formidable from his arts, as from his arms;---disgracing courage by premeditated violations of public faith;---crowning immorality with the palms of philosophy, and oppression with the cap of liberty; this successful Corsican, brandishing, with one hand, the torch of *Erostratus*, and, with the other, the sabre of *Genseric*,* formed a plan for burying Switzerland beneath the ruins of Italy.

* "Because Catiline had a strong mind, was he, therefore, a less detestable villain? And was it, therefore, proper to paint the crimes of a ruffian in the same colours as the exploits of a hero?"

J. J. Rousseau's Lettres sur les Spectacles.

"A great difference ought to be made between the hero who dyes the soil with his blood in defence of his country, and the intrepid banditti who consign to death the innocent and unfortunate inhabitants of a foreign land."

Raynal, *Histoire Philosophique et politique des deux Indes*, Liv. I.

"Before philosophy," adds Mallet du Pan, "had assumed the Revolutionary casque, she held such language as this:---Now, the two authorities here quoted have, no doubt, lost their credit."

French liberty, it has been remarked, is so odious and vile, that the very criminals themselves rejected it with scorn. The insurgents of the *Pays de Vaud* having released ten malefactors who were employed on the public works at Yverdun, and honoured them with a fraternal embrace, the captives declared that they would never accept their liberty from rebels. And when the prison doors were shut against them, they repaired to Berne, where they surrendered themselves, and were sent back to their place of confinement.

On the third of March, Schauenbourg signified to the council of Berne, 'that, apprized by certain intelligence that most of the persons of both sexes, confined in the prisons of that town, were only deprived of their liberty on account of their attachment to France, he required that they should all be released, else the magistrates themselves should undergo the same treatment as had been experienced by *these friends of freedom.* The French General's letter was read to the prisoners, to the number of a hundred, and it was left to their choice, to join Schauenbourg, to return to their homes, or to contribute to the defence of the State;—they all chose the last, and most of them were killed at *Fraubrunnen.*

The scenes of horror which were displayed, after the triumph of French arms and of French

intrigues, baffle all description, and almost exceed credibility. Disgusted as I was with the bloody annals of the Irish Rebellion, just dismissed from my attention, the conduct of the French in Switzerland surpassed even those in atrocity, and inspire the mind, if possible, with still greater horror and disgust. All that tyranny the most oppressive, rapine the most insatiate, cruelty the most sanguinary, lust the most unbridled, could inflict, did that devoted country experience.

Having, by the conquest of Berne, reduced all the larger cantons, Mr. Brune's next care was to give to the country whose freedom he had destroyed, some new constitution, formed after the French model. As, however, he had not been supplied with one ready made, from the celebrated "*pigeon holes*" of the Abbè Sieyes, and as the formation of a new constitution was a task not quite so easy as the composition of a revolutionary manifesto or harangue, Brune was at a loss how to act. His first intention was to divide Switzerland into *three* Republics, the Rhodanic, the Helvetian, and the Republic of William Tell;* but this whimsical notion was soon changed for another plan, more conformable to the views and interests of France; and it was

* *History of the Invasion of Switzerland by the French*, &c. By Henry Zschokke.—English Translation, p. 204.

resolved to unite all the cantons under one government, and to give to it the appellation of the *Helvetic Republic, one and indivisible.* As the Directory had hitherto limited its threats to the *aristocratic* cantons, and had made their *tyranny* the pretext for attacking them, the democratic cantons had been lulled into a false security, from which they were now roused by the report of this projected union. Frank, open, and honest, themselves, they were still unwilling to suspect others of hypocrisy, deceit, and fraud; and, therefore, they resolved to apply to the French Directory, in order to ascertain their intention respecting themselves. In the united address of the small cantons of Uri, Schwitz, Unterwalden, Zug, and Glaris, they declared that none of them could believe that it was the intention of the French, or consistent with their principles, to disturb the small democratical cantons in the exercise of a liberty, which the French nation professed to have had in view to give to the rest of Switzerland. They besought Brune to give them a positive declaration, that the Directory had no design to disturb them in the exercise of their religion, their independence, their liberty, and their political constitution. Their democratic government, they told him, possessed their love and attachment, as a good mother which had for ages

promoted their happiness. It had consecrated, as its principles, in all their purity, the rights of man, and the sovereignty of the people; it was, therefore, they remarked, in perfect consonance with the government adopted by the French Republic.* This was certainly the strongest

* Idem p. 199. The representative of these cantons, having truly explained the principles of their government, proceeded to make the following strong remarks:—

"Such, in the abstract, are the bases of our constitutions. Do they not rest upon principles similar to those on which your government is founded? How then can you have a wish to annihilate our happiness, by infringing our political organization? What can be your motives to do it, and what advantages can you expect to derive from it?

"Supposing even that you had the power, we believe that your justice will not permit you to employ it for the introduction among us, by force, of *a constitution, which scarcely a hundredth part of our citizens will be able to comprehend.*

"We are a people of herdsmen and mountaineers, who, faithful to the simple manners of our ancestors, have been able hitherto to live with few wants, and to content ourselves with our happy mediocrity. The small resources of our cantons would scarcely supply salaries for the great number of public functionaries which the new constitution would give us. Resources must be found in the fortunes of individuals, which, being for the most part very moderate, would, in a short time, be exhausted, and this inevitable consequence would lead to the speedy and total ruin of our country.

"Do not, then, be surprised, citizen Directors, if the certainty of this afflicting prospect leads us to abhor this new order of things, and to regard it as a burthen, the weight of which exceeds our strength."

appeal that could be made to the agent of a nation, which had murdered its king, subverted all its ancient institutions, proscribed its nobles, and massacred its citizens, on the scaffold, and in the field, for the purpose of consecrating the *rights of man*, and *the sovereignty of the people.* But neither the Directory, nor their emissaries, military or diplomatic, suffered any regard for consistency of principle or of conduct, to interfere with their views of conquest, or projects of subjection. Brune, a week after this address had been presented, (on the 22d of March) issued his mandate, from his head-quarters at Berne, for the establishment of an Helvetic Republic, one and indivisible;* and ordered all the cantons to send deputies, without delay, to Arau, to form the legislative body.

As the smaller cantons inherited a considerable portion of the spirit of their fathers, they refused to obey this command of an insolent foreigner, who presumed, without the smallest pretext, to rob them of their birthright, to destroy those liberties which they had enjoyed for centuries, and to dictate the form of government which it was his pleasure they should

* But a few days before, Brune had assured the cantons of Lucerne and Unterwalden, that "*The great nation,*" was only desirous to preserve its antient relations with them, and had no hostile intentions towards them whatever.

adopt. The larger cantons, however, having accepted the new constitution, and taken the oath prescribed to them, the legislative body assembled, a Directory was appointed, and the government put into action.

Still had the smaller cantons, inadequate as their force was to cope with the French, without other assistance, but acted with unanimity and wisdom, directing their efforts, jointly, to the attainment of one common object, they might have succeeded in this unequal conflict, and have inflicted severe vengeance on the invaders of their territory, and on the assassins of their fellow-citizens. United, they would have had a force sufficient, if conducted with skill and prudence, to make an impression on some part of the extended line of the French army; and any success gained over the enemy would have speedily increased the number of their adherents, as, although the leading persons in the larger cantons had adopted the new constitution, the great body of the people were extremely averse to it, and would cheerfully have shaken off the yoke, which they had, most reluctantly, been compelled to wear.—But, instead of this union of object and of effort, the smaller cantons were divided among themselves, and each sought rather to provide for its own individual defence, than to make one general exertion in support

of the general cause. After one portion of their force had taken possession of the town of Lucerne, which they evacuated on the approach of the enemy, and maintained several partial actions with the French, in which they were generally successful, they found that even their victories must ultimately prove ruinous to them, by the gradual diminution of their force. They concluded a treaty, (on the 6th of May,) with Schauenbourg, (who had now succeeded Brune in the chief command of the army,) by which they agreed to accede to the new constitution, on condition that no armed Frenchman should set foot on their territory.

The French Directory, when informed of this treaty, expressed their displeasure at it, and, while they ratified it, secretly resolved to break it the moment a favourable opportunity should occur; well assured of the fidelity of the Swiss legislative body, which, in the name of France, rivetted, at Arau, the chains of their country; reigning, in the Helvetic Directory, by means of their creatures, *Ochs* and *La Harpe*, the regency of Paris determined either to subject the democracies of the Alps to their despotism, or else to exterminate them.

In consequence of this determination, so perfectly compatible with the *new morality* which constantly influenced the conduct of the

rulers of the French Republic, from Robespierre to Buonaparté, orders were immediately transmitted to Schauenbourg, to get rid of the treaty of the 6th of May, in any way he could; and, at all events, to force his way into that cradle of Helvetic liberty, before the approach of winter.

During this time, if any of the Swiss had been really deceived by the declarations of the French, that, in the new constitution which they had compelled them, at the point of the bayonet, to accept, they had no other object in view than the establishment of their liberty and independence on a solid and durable basis, they had very soon reason to censure their own credulity, and to deplore its fatal effects. When the Swiss Directory began to act, it was natural to suppose, that there would be an end to the revolutionary despotism of French Janissaries, and that martial law would yield to constitutional decrees. But this supposition, if it were ever entertained, was proved to be chimerical, for no sooner did the Directory begin to exercise acts of imperial sovereignty, than they were plainly told, that they were placed there merely to superintend the political economy of the country, and as to all transactions of importance, and matters of state, they must implicitly follow the directions of the French govern-

ment. And to prove that it was intended to enforce this assumed right of dictation, the French Commissary proceeded to seize all the public treasures, and all the stores of every denomination belonging to the State, and sent them to France.

At the beginning of August, Schauenbourg settled his plan of proceeding, and began his preparations for carrying it into effect; for which purpose he received the assistance of the Directory of Arau. In order to obtain a pretext for the projected attack and invasion of the democratic cantons, he deemed it necessary to provoke an insurrection. With this view, he called upon them to take the civic oath of obedience to the new constitution, imposed, says the best of the Swiss writers, on Switzerland, by forty-six thousand French assassins, who had set up for professors of political law. It was easy to foresee the effects of this measure on a religious people, whose consciences, hitherto, had been as free as their laws. Troops of slaves, without morals and without a God, corrupt and servile legislators, remorseless tyrants, superior to shame, and above punishment, may dictate, receive, alter, and overthrow, year after year, *unperishable* constitutions, to which they have sworn obedience;—but this disgraceful traffic, this impious trade of perjury, was still unknown

in the pure region of the higher Alps. When they placed their unfortunate inhabitants between perjury and death, the Directory, and their general, rightly calculated that the choice would not be doubtful. In fact, great numbers rejected the proffered oath. The cantons of Appenzell, Schwitz, Uri, Unterwalden, Zug, and a great part of the canton of Lucerne, were unanimous in their refusal to take it. In order to compel a compliance with the Directorial Mandate, threatening proclamations, the usual forerunners of French cruelties, were issued, and every art of deception and intrigue was exerted.—"If you do not pay implicit obedience to the decree of the Directory, within the term prescribed, I will enter the *rebellious districts* with my army, and will inflict a severe and exemplary punishment on the *guilty*." Such was the language addressed by Schauenbourg to these Republicans of five hundred years standing! But, as the monstrous insolence of this ruffian failed to intimidate the generous descendants of William Tell, he strengthened the division of his army, stationed at Lucerne, with fifteen new battalions, armed some gunboats on the neighbouring lake, and, accompanied with a large train of artillery, set out, on the seventh of September, to carry his sanguinary designs into execution.

The lower part of the canton of Unterwald, which borders on the lake of Lucerne, was now destined to be the scene of crimes the most atrocious, and of courage the most heroic. While Schauenbourg attacked the Swiss in front, he turned their flanks, by sending one of his columns by Oberland, and over mount Brunig. The people of Unterwald, with no forces but their own, a few pieces of cannon, and their natural entrenchments, repelled the first attacks of their oppressors, on the eighth of September; but, the next day, the French penetrated into the valley of Stanz, with a powerful force; and cannonaded the capital of the district. For thirteen hours, the inhabitants defended themselves with the most desperate courage; men, women, priests, and children, animated with one common sentiment of purest patriotism, rushed into the thickest of the fight, and evinced the ardour of the love which they bore to the country, by the energy of their efforts in support of her cause. Superior numbers ultimately prevailed; and fifteen hundred Swiss were killed, and two thousand wounded, in this gallant struggle for expiring liberty. Upwards of two thousand of the French, and a great number of officers, who were destroyed by hatchets, or fragments of rocks, the only weapons with which many of the

Swiss were supplied—paid with their lives the forfeit of this criminal attempt on the freedom of an independent and unoffending, people, There was no enormity, however atrocious, which the base leader of this banditti, did not commit in these desolated vallies;—numbers of their peaceable citizens were massacred, in cold blood, in their houses, and even in their churches; both sexes were involved in one common destruction; and the whole country, given up to the ravages of fire and the sword, was soon reduced to a shapeless mass of ruins, and the scene of plenty and content was converted into a hideous desert, stained with the blood of its late inhabitants. The barbarous invaders either destroyed or carried off all the cattle, which formed the only means of subsistence, and the only wealth of the country. As if anxious to outdo the blackest deeds which mark the blood-stained annals of the Goths and Vandals, inflated with success, and foaming with rage, at the brave resistance which they had experienced, they laid whole towns and villages in ashes, ravished the wives and daughters of a virtuous and uncorrupted peasantry, and left not a cottage standing in many square leagues of country. Great God! when this wide-extended ruin and desolation are contemplated, achieved, as they were, by wretches who pro-

fane thy name, murder thy Ministers, disfigure thy works, and violate thine altars, may it not be permitted to imprecate thy vengeance on their heads; to beseech thee to stop them in their criminal career, to supplicate thee to make their destructive machinations recoil upon themselves, and to call upon thee to give an awful lesson to mankind, by inflicting a dreadful punishment on the vilest monsters that ever disgraced human nature? An age of labour will not suffice to repair the desolation and misery which the French Directory and their agents, in a few hours, spread over this unhappy land.'

Schauenbourg, not content with having accomplished his bloody purpose, by means from which honour, as well as humanity, would have revolted, resolved further to insult the Swiss by calling on the Directory at Arau to partake his joy and his *triumph*.—" Victory, said he, " decided in favour of *the Republicans*"—that is, in favour of men, who, without a pretext for interference, much less a cause for attack, had invaded and destroyed the oldest and freest Republic in Europe; murdering her faithful inhabitants; and desolating her fruitful plains! They even destroyed the very monuments of her national independence, and her national glory;—they pulled down the monument

erected in honour of William Tell, the founder of Swiss liberty, and the chapel built in commemoration of the victory of Morat. The French General, however, was constrained to admit, that he never was present at a more desperate action. "Victory cost a great deal of blood, but we fought with *rebels whom it was necessary to subdue.*"*

This dreadful success decided the neighbouring cantons, to submit, at least for the present, to the military mandates of a power which they could no longer resist. Schauen-

* It was well observed, by a contemporary writer on this dispatch,—"It is difficult to know whether to laugh or to shudder with horror, at hearing rebels, covered with the blood of their own Monarch, and boasting of having restored lost liberty, treating as *rebels* a sovereign people, fighting in defence of their laws, their religion, their houses, and their independence, against Parisians, Gascons, and Normans, who came to scale their unexplored mountains, in order to lay waste the country, and to plunder and enslave her inhabitants. Admirable results of a revolution, made *by the people, and for the people,* for the rights of their sovereignty, for the glory of philosophy, and for an example to the universe! A respectable nation that, formed of these countrymen of *Montaigne,* of *Hopital,* of *Sully,* of *Catinat,* of *Fenelon,* and of *Malesherbes,* who, for five-pence a day, sell their lives to five distributors of calamities; who annihilate flourishing societies; and who, while waiting for some new empire to desolate, amuse themselves with plunging little innocent democracies into that hell of which they are the Ministers! *Mallet du Pan.*

bourg entered those of Schwitz and Zug without resistance; and disarmed the inhabitants. If the regicidal rulers of Republican France had committed no other act, of a disgraceful nature, their conduct to the Swiss would alone suffice to stamp their name and character with indelible infamy, and to transmit them to posterity as objects of eternal execration. And here it must be remarked, that the Irish rebels, by carrying on a correspondence with the French Directory, and preserving a friendly intercourse and an alliance with them, at the very time when they were employed in the execution of their infernal project for destroying the freedom and independence of the Swiss; and in murdering the innocent inhabitants of the country, with circumstances of wanton cruelty, disgraceful to humanity, aggravated their own guilt in a very great degree, and proved, beyond a doubt, that *liberty* was a mere watch word with them, and that they only sought to overturn the established constitution, for the purpose of establishing a most odious and sanguinary despotism on its ruins.

While the Directory had, by these measures, obtained possession of Switzerland, for their alliance with the mock government of that country rendered them, in fact, masters of the country, and thus afforded them

a fresh means of annoying and attacking the House of Austria, the Congress of Rastadt, opened for the purpose of settling the terms of a peace, between France and the Empire, continued its sittings.—It was in a manner surrounded with French soldiers, for the Emperor, in strict observance of the treaty of Campo Formio, had withdrawn his troops from Suabia and the Upper Rhine.—Mentz then fell into the hands of the French; and the fort of the Rhine, in front of Manheim, was seized without ceremony. Thus the Directory accomplished their object, by depriving the Empire of the assistance of the Emperor, and by reaping the fruits of the armistice without observing its conditions. By these transactions, all kind of confidence was destroyed, and it could not be expected that the Congress of Rastadt would produce any beneficial result. The French Government had recourse to their usual arts for seducing the Court of Vienna by delusive hopes, or for intimidating it by threats; by exciting dissentions and jealousy between the different Members of the Germanic body, with a view to profit by the confusion; by subverting the Constitution of Germany; and by breaking asunder the thread which held its different parts together. Whenever the French Government sought to allure

the Emperor by holding out to him a prospect of aggrandizement, they took special care to apprize the Court of Berlin of the circumstance, as a proof of the growing ambition of Austria. One day the Emperor was promised an extension of territory on the side of Bavaria; but the next, the Duke of Deux Ponts, heir to the Electorate, was assured of the protection of the Directory, against the projected dismemberment of his inheritance. In order to shew their contempt for crowned heads, the Directory had selected Jean de Bry, the man who, in an early period of the Revolution, had proposed to the National Convention to form a band of 1,200 Regicides, to be employed in the assassination of all the Sovereigns of Europe. Month after month passed away in fruitless negotiation, while, as the Imperial Deputies extended their concessions, the French plenipotentiaries increased their demands.— After it had been agreed to cede to France all the German possessions on the left bank of the Rhine, it was clearly and distinctly understood, that the middle of the Rhine was to form the boundary between the two countries. Having gained this point, the French next insisted on retaining all the islands in the Rhine, and certain positions on the right bank. In short, it was perfectly clear that they would submit

to no terms which did not both destroy the integrity of the German Empire, and open to them a free passage, at all times, into Germany.—Throughout the whole of the negotiation, the French displayed the most outrageous insolence, and the most despicable duplicity; and it continued, with little variation, during the whole of the year 1798.

It was not the least remarkable circumstance attending this disgraceful scene, that the French, after securing the cession of the whole country, which they claimed for themselves, on the left bank of the Rhine, insisted on dictating the mode in which the different parties, to whom the ceded territory had belonged, should be indemnified by the plunder of other provinces on the right bank of the Rhine. This conduct was alone sufficient to display the turbulent, and revolutionary, spirit by which the Directory were actuated; for, having gained their object by extending the boundary of their Republic to the Rhine, it could be of no consequence to them, how the injured parties were indemnified, or whether they had any indemnification or not, unless, for the purpose of dismembering the German Empire, by sowing dissentions between its different Princes.—*Justice* was out of the question, for it could not be more unjust to deprive the proprietors

of territory on the left bank of the river of their dominions, without any indemnification, than it would be to rob another proprietor of his territory on the right bank, in order to indemnify the first. The means proposed was to *secularise*, as it was called, certain bishopricks of the Empire, and to transfer them to the injured parties.—In short, the whole was a system of plunder and injustice, perfectly congenial with the genius of the French Republic, and with the feelings and principles of its rulers and agents, but such as the Emperor, or any other lawful Sovereign, should have perished, ere he should have given it the stamp of his authority.

The deputies of the Empire had a pretty strong proof of the respect which the French Republic paid to the Independent States, with whom she was at peace, during their diplomatic conferences at Rastadt, in the conduct of the Republican Ambassador at Vienna.—The Directory had selected Bernadotte for this office, probably, for his insolence and presumption; and certainly not for his diplomatic skill and knowledge, for he had been raised from the ranks to the command of an army. This will be considered as no unjust imputation on the *virtuous* rulers of the French Republic, when it is remembered, that this man had,

in the most open and explicit manner, previously displayed his total disregard of justice, and his utter contempt for the laws of nations. He had arrested Mr. D'Antraigues, a French Emigrant, who had entered into the Russian service, and was attached to the Russian embassy. And when the ambassador represented the injustice of this proceeding, and the insult which it involved to the Sovereign whom he represented; the brutal republican answered, "This is not a question of law or of justice, but depends on the law of the strongest, and I am the strongest here; M. d'Antraigues is our enemy; if he were the strongest he would put us to death; I am the strongest, and I'll see what I can do." This was a sufficient claim to promotion, with men who had themselves risen by acts of violence and injustice from the lowest to the highest stations. When sent to Vienna, on the conclusion of the treaty of Campo Formio, he was, as might be expected, completely ignorant of every thing which an ambassador ought to know; and he was totally unable to transact the smallest business, without previous recourse to his Secretaries and Aides-de-Camps. He had also taken with him to Vienna, a number of young republicans, men of weak minds, and dissipated character, vain of the name of Frenchmen, which every honest man now blushed to bear, who, with equal folly and

indecency, ridiculed the customs and manners of the Germans; boasted of their own superiority; and vilified every thing which differed from what they had been accustomed to see in their own country. The systematic forbearance of the Austrian cabinet, in passing over insults and insolence, which would have justified an application to the Directory, to recall the licentious troop whom they had sent to his capital, encouraged Bernadotte to believe, that he might proceed much farther in his career of encroachment, and that he might even produce a revolt in the very capital of the empire, and the seat of government; a brilliant exploit, which could not fail to give him a distinguished place in the annals of this revolutionary age. For this purpose, having published his intention of soon leaving Vienna, and having taken such steps as would induce a belief that he meant to carry his intention into effect, he secretly ordered a tri-coloured flag of liberty, to be made, with strict injunctions to have it ready by the 13th of April, (1798.) On the evening of that day, the people of Vienna were surprized by the sudden display of this symbol of rebellion, four yards in length, in the balcony of the ambassador's residence, and extending from thence into the public street. The people, very naturally flocked together at this extraordinary sight, in the heart of the

capital, and considering it in a just point of view, as an insult offered to their sovereign, and as a signal of revolt, expressed their displeasure, with a warmth and a plainness, well suited to the occasion. The officers of the police, however, interfered, and the people would have quietly dispersed, had not some of the ambassador's people stept forward in the balcony, and insulted them by their threats, while the servants below were as insolent as their masters; and Bernadotte himself, forgetting his public character and station, heated with wine, and enraged at the stupidity of the people in censuring what he expected them to applaud, ran to the gate of his residence, with all the fury of a Parisian regicide, leading a mob to the attack of a palace, and grasping, in one hand, his sabre, and clenching the other, uttered the most offensive menaces, and the most vulgar abuse, against them. The rage of the people now rose above controul; but still they went no further than to insist on the removal of the tri-coloured flag. This, however, was peremptorily refused by *Bernadotte*, nor could all the intreaties of *the director of the police*, and the commander of *the town guard*, who had hastened to his relief, as soon as they were apprized of the tumult, induce him to listen to their earnest entreaties, to comply with

this reasonable request. These officers were treated by him with the most brutal insolence, and the most indecent threats. They sent, however, for picquets of cavalry and infantry, which hastened to the spot, and exerted themselves to the utmost to preserve tranquillity. But the streets were soon filled with people, and they were so incensed at the repeated insults and threats of this vulgar representative of the upstarts of the Luxembourg, that they assailed his house with stones, broke the windows, threw down, and destroyed, the flag of Rebellion, burst open the street-door, and demolished his kitchen furniture. The military, however, who had by this time arrived, took possession of the stair-case, and saved the Ambassador from the fury of the people, who were very well disposed to inflict on him such a punishment as the insolent brutality of his conduct most richly deserved. At two in the morning tranquillity was completely restored. The next day, two Noblemen, attached to the Court, were sent to Bernadotte to enter into an amicable explanation of this unpleasant occurrence. But it neither suited his temper nor his designs, to be satisfied with any explanations which could be given; and he vehemently insisted on receiving his passports without delay.—And, on the 15th of April, this ruffian,

who had nearly fallen a victim to his own infamous attempt to raise an insurrection in the Capital of the Sovereign to whom he was accredited as Ambassador, in violation of the law of nations, and of that respect which is due from one independent power to another, left Vienna, escorted by a large body of horse, and proceeded to Rastadt.

The Revolution in Switzerland was not the only proof which the Emperor received of the hostile spirit of the French Directory, during the *amicable* conferences at Rastadt. The Cisalpine Republic, Buonaparté's favourite child, was not yet modelled to the taste of these revolutionary Cognoscenti, not sufficiently humiliated in spirit, nor sufficiently docile and tractable. A proposed alliance with France, though ultimately adopted, had caused great murmurs, and excited much discontent. It was resolved, therefore, to make a radical reform, both in the Legislative body, and in the Directory. Some decisive step appeared the more necessary to be taken, as the public mind in Italy was considerably agitated, and as execrations of the French, and ardent wishes for the return of the Austrian dominion, were openly and loudly expressed; and as there was also every prospect of a speedy renewal of the war in Germany. As the French Directory had given

to these Italians a *perfect and unperishable* Constitution, with one stroke of their pens;—so, with another, they destroyed it, by proving the impossibility of carrying it into execution.—The first Constitution was the work of Buonaparté, who, to save trouble and expence, carried the last new French code, to be transcribed at Milan, distributed the different powers, as they had been distributed in France, chalked out the Cisalpine territory, divided, sub-divided, and reduced to symmetry, the national representation, filled the chief departments of the State with his creatures, and proclaimed the immortality of this glorious work.

The Directory, and all their train of writers and orators, celebrated this master-piece of wisdom, in their turn, as a wonderful conception of genius, under which the Cisalpine Republic would flourish for ever, would astonish the world by the miracles of her liberty, and would bless the generosity of her founders day and night. They *guaranteed* this Constitution, and that guarantee was even made a special condition of the treaty of alliance.

Such was the language, and such the conduct, of the Directory in 1797; but, in 1798, they changed their views, and impeached the infallibility of their own oracles. The mutinous disposition of the Cisalpine Government,

and the resolution now adopted to render that Republic, to all intents and purposes, a province of France, led them into a *majestic* inconsistency. The execution of their new plan was entrusted to one Trouvè, a man who had been engaged to write stupid paragraphs in the *Moniteur*, and, for a short time, was Secretary to the Directory, then returned to his old occupations, whence he was taken to fill a diplomatic situation at Naples, where he refused to comply with a general custom, and to take off his hat, when the King entered the Opera House.* For this purpose Trouvè was sent as Ambassador to Milan; and, while he amused the Government with lies and protestations, he concerted, with General Brune, and another tool of the Directory, one Faypoult, who had

* Cassandre, ou quelques Reflexions sur la Revolution Française, &c. 1798. This little work, which contains many curious anecdotes, connected with the History of the Times, is the production of General Daniscan, the opponent of Buonaparté, at the attack of the Sections of Paris, in the Autumn of 1795, by the Conventional troops; a man of sense, information, activity, and zeal, who was perfectly acquainted with all the mysteries of the French Revolution, and with all the conduct and characters of its founders and agents.---His *Bandits Demasqués*, and his *Fléau des Tyrans et des Septembriseurs*, exhibit sufficient proofs of the qualities which I have described him to possess, and will supply some useful materials for the historian of the Revolution.

formerly been Minister at Genoa, a new Legislative experiment on the Republic. All the constituted authorities of this *yearling* republic, and all the violent revolutionists, were decided enemies to any innovation. But the people themselves, supremely indifferent to these transmutations, viewed, with equal contempt, the advocates of the new system and their opponents, and only felt regret for the loss of their legitimate government.

As soon as the business was arranged, and had received the final sanction of the Luxembourg, Trouvè, and the French General at Milan, opened the scene by throwing four hundred of the most distinguished enemies of the projected innovation into prison. They threatened with the same fate whoever should dare to disobey them, and signified their will to the two Councils which were nearly deserted, ordering them to fix their seal to the new regulation of their *social organization*.—"*Receive it,*" said this modern Justinian, "*as a pledge of the friendship of the French Republic.*" The *Lettre de Cachet*, by which the French Directory notified their will to the Legislative Body, was one continued satire on their first Constitution, and, consequently, on that of France, from which it had been literally copied.—"*It has led you,*" said they, "*into the most complete and*

frightful anarchy." Yet, the year before, this same constitution had been presented and *guaranteed* to them as a master-piece of wisdom, and a treasure of prosperity.* By the new charter of Cisalpine liberty, the members of the Legislative Body were reduced from two hundred and forty, to one hundred and twenty; but the powers of the Directory were greatly enlarged. To these were assigned the privilege of proposing laws, the absolute disposal of the public treasure, of the army, and even of the guard of the councils; the right of annulling, at their discretion, the liberty of the press; and the appointment of military officers. Mr. Trouvè alledged *economy* as the motive for reducing the rulers of the Legislative Body, though, at the same time, he increased the salaries of the remainder, as well as those of the Directory.

The object of the sages of Luxembourg, in this pantomime exhibition, was to increase the facility of corrupting and governing the Cisalpine legislature, without encountering those obstacles which arise from the determined spirit of independent representatives; while, by the abridgement of their powers, and the extension of those of the Directory, the whole authority of the state was placed in the hands of five

* Mallet du Pan.

persons, who would be more easy to manage than two hundred and forty.

When the tyrants of the Luxembourg silenced the Cisalpine opposition by committing them to prison; when they dismissed, in an arbitrary manner, one hundred and twenty representatives, and five directors of an *independent* republic; when they compelled the relics of this legislative body to promulgate, without examination or contradiction, the political manifestoes of the journalist, Trouvè, these judges of the new school anathematized the first constitution, as not having received *the sanction of the people!* Never did any set of men display a more sovereign or insulting contempt for their fellow-creatures; never was the abuse of power accompanied by such shameless derision!—The one hundred and forty deputies who remained were selected from the most insignificant and contemptible of the whole body; the Directors were of the same description; the most respectable of the five was one *Lamberti*, who, before the French invasion, had gained a subsistence by keeping a public brothel and gaming house, in which he compelled his own wife to play a principal part.*

Rome was destined to undergo as great a

* Mallet du Pan, Mercure Britannique, tom. i. p. 370.

transformation as the Cisalpine republic, and by much the same means. The peace of Toentino, concluded at the beginning of 1797, by which the French had gained the legations of Ferrara, Bologna, and Romagna, besides a large sum of money,* and a large collection of pictures and statues, having proved the facility with which the weak government of Rome might be plundered by the despoilers of Europe, the French Directory resolved to complete its total subversion, with a view to further depredations. To carry this resolution into effect, Cacault, the French resident, was recalled, and a more expert revolutionist, Joseph Buonaparté, sent to supply his place. The first act of this new ambassador was to claim the liberty of all persons who were confined for their *political opinions*, that is, all traitors and seditious persons. These *emancipated patriots* were anxious of course to shew their gratitude to their benefactor, and were accordingly constant in their visits to him, to which they were further induced by the circumstance of the security which it afforded; as a certain distance round the abode of a foreign minister, was deemed sacred by the government of Rome, and even exempted from their authority. Soon after, Joseph Buonaparté presided at a public

* 1,750,000*l.*

meeting, called the feast of liberty, and convened by some of the most worthless characters in Rome.

The disaffected being prepared, by these preliminary measures, for acts of violence and disorder, began to exhibit some unequivocal symptoms of revolt. They erected poles, in the different parts of the city, on which they stuck caps of liberty, and danced round them at midnight. They sent out false patroles to deceive and confine the regular guard; and, at length, they appointed the 27th of December for carrying into effect the settled plan for the subversion of the papal authority.

Early in the evening of that day, a number of persons began to assemble in the street opposite to the Corsini palace, at which the French ambassador resided. To these men, French cockades were given, and a Frenchman was seen to distribute money among them. As the mob increased, loud murmurs of discontent were heard, and public orators descanted on the misery of the people, and the oppressions of the government, in strict imitation of the plan pursued by the French regicides, in the Palais Royal, in the first days of the revolution. One of these orators was an Abbe, who explained to the mob the meaning of various quotations, with which he had adorned his patriotic ha-

rangue, the drift of which was to prove, from scripture, that the time was drawing nigh for the overthrow of the existing government. By this time they had acquired sufficient strength to begin their active operations, and they proceeded to take possession of one of the guard houses, and to seize the arms. They next attempted to secure the Ponte Sesto, but here they were opposed by a patrole of horse, who drove them back into the court-yard of the Corsini palace, and into the adjacent street.—The noise and confusion which their flight occasioned, induced Buonaparté and his friends to come out of the palace to learn the cause. They had their swords drawn, and General Duphot called out to the officer commanding the cavalry, to come and speak to him; the commotion, however, continuing, the military fired on the mob, and a *chance shot** killed the French General.

Buonaparté, and three French officers who attended him, finding their own acts recoiling on themselves, and fearing, probably, to experience the fate of Duphot, prudently returned to the palace. The tumult was soon quelled by the steady conduct of the military, and not more than ten or twelve lives were lost upon the

* *A Brief account of the subversion of the papal government*, 1798. By Richard Duppa.

occasion. Having thus gained the wished-for pretext, and accomplished the principal object of his treacherous mission, Joseph Buonaparté left Rome, with his suite, early the next morning, notwithstanding the earnest, and abject entreaties of the Papal Secretary of State, who offered him every satisfaction which he could possibly require, for an event which was the effect of an accident, occasioned by his own most infamous machinations. Some weeks previous to this event, the Cisalpine troops had received orders to make an irruption into the territory of the Church, and they even took forcible possession of the fortresses of Saint Leo and Pesero; while they laid waste the adjacent country. The only pretext for this invasion of a friendly state, was that the Pope had not formally acknowledged the sovereignty of the Cisalpine Republic. Never, before the revolution, was the mere forbearance to acknowledge a new power, which any independent nation has a right either to acknowledge or not, as it pleases, without assigning any motive for its conduct, alledged as a reason for committing hostilities, in time of peace, and without any previous demand of satisfaction, or any explanation whatever. But that this was a false pretext soon proved manifest, as the Pope, anxious to avoid all disputes, made the acknow-

ledgement in the form prescribed; yet, at the very time of this tumult at Rome, these Cisalpine slaves of France were continuing their ravages in the march of Ancona. The moment, however, Buonaparté left Rome, they received orders to discontinue their hostile operations, and to restore the territory which they had seized.*

* Notwithstanding these facts, which cannot be controverted, a French writer, who has compiled what he calls, "Historical and *Philosophical Memoirs* of Pius the Sixth and his pontificate," &c. has had the astonishing effrontery to assert, that Duphot "fell the victim of his generous devotion, under the *repeated strokes* of the base wretches whose rage he had hoped to appease;"---the truth is that he was shot by a chance-ball, and, of course, received no blows. But, even according to the account here given, Duphot deserved the fate he met with; and the Roman soldiers had a right to shoot him, even supposing they had shot him intentionally. For it is stated, that Duphot had rushed forward to protect the seditious insurgents against the troops; in other words, he had joined the insurrection, and opposed the troops who had been employed to quell it. But this historical and philosophical republican does not blush to assert, that the French ambassador had a right to protect a banditti who were committing acts of high treason, and openly rebelling against their lawful Sovereign! His words are, "the insurgents having run to take refuge within the jurisdiction of the French ambassador's palace, which ought to have been for them not a place of head-quarters, as they pretended, but an *inviolable asylum*; the armed force, *equally vile as atrocious*, had the audacity to pursue them into its precincts, and to convert that asylum into a theatre of battle. Already the law

The first month of the year 1798 was passed in prayers, supplications, and in all those

of nations was most glaringly violated, &c." Vol. II. p. 327, 328. The difference between an inviolable asylum for insurgents, and head-quarters for them, is not very easily understood; as wherever they could collect in safety, free from interruption, and form their plans of attack, would be, to all intents and purposes, their *head-quarters*. But this monstrous pretension, claiming for the French diplomatists---(a set of men chosen expressly for their crimes, and for no other purpose than to insult the princes to whom they were delegated, and to excite their subjects to revolt) a right to afford protection to men in a state of insurrection against their lawful government, and to render the residences of French ambassadors asylums for rebels, on no account to be violated, sufficiently shews the utter contempt in which the French themselves held the law of nations, the determined profligacy with which they violated the rights of Independent States, and braved their Sovereigns in the very seats of their government. To suppose that the extraordinary respect which the papal government paid to foreign ambassadors, and the consequent exemption of the precincts of their residences from the ordinary visits of the police, and from all the common processes of law, should extend to the protection of rebels and traitors, is a supposition that the Pope had adopted a suicidal system of policy, equally irrational and dangerous,---a supposition which could only be engendered in the disordered brain of a French regicide. Nothing could be more clear or rational than the origin and progress of this insurrection, and of the revolution which followed it. The French having determined to produce it, recall an ambassador, whose conduct has been comparatively peaceable and decorous, and after ordering their minions, the Cisalpine government, to invade the Roman territory, in the

spiritual means with which the Romish Church abounds, for impressing the minds of the people with a due sense of their situation, and for im-

hope of having their interposition claimed to repel it, they then send another ambassador, whose first act is to insist on the release of all persons who had been imprisoned for treason or sedition; public murmurs immediately begin; the French distribute money among the mob; an insurrection ensues, the papal guards, contrary to expectation, endeavour to quell it; the insurgents fly for protection to the French ambassador; and a French General hastens to their assistance, and endeavours to prevent the troops from attacking or apprehending them; all this is perfectly rational and consistent; whereas, the account given by the French, imputing the public commotions to the papal government itself, is not more contrary to fact than repugnant to common sense. The Pope had made every sacrifice to avert the wrath of the French; he had a dread both of their arts and of their arms; and he stooped to the most abject submission, in order to procure their forbearance. Yet is it pretended, that, in opposition both to his known sentiments and to his evident interest, he caused the French ambassador's palace to be attacked by his troops, and did that which, he must very well know, would infallibly produce his own ruin, and the subversion of his government. Unhappily, the degraded state of the press, on the continent of Europe, at this period, afforded the means of circulating the most barefaced, and the most odious, falsehoods, while it rendered their confutation extremely difficult, and frequently impracticable. Fortunately, however, for the cause of truth, documents have survived the wrecks of empires, sufficient to overthrow the monstrous fabric of imposition and fraud, erected by sanguinary tyrants, who aimed not only to subdue the bodies of men, but to enslave their minds.

precating the divine favour on their cause. Had the enthusiasm thus excited, been properly directed to a resolute resistance of the meditated attack by the French, it would have been most fortunate for the country, and the barbarians would have had reason to repent their injustice and rapacity. But, instead of resistance, nothing but the most abject submission, and the most servile solicitations for mercy and forbearance, were in the contemplation of the statesmen of the Vatican. In the instructions sent to the papal ambassador at Paris, the Marquis Massimi, Cardinal Doria, who wrote them, in the Pope's name and his own, deplored an event which, he truly observed, it was not possible for them either to foresee or to prevent. "You are to request of the Directory," said he, "that they will demand whatever satisfaction they think proper. To demand and to obtain it will be the same thing, for neither his Holiness, nor I, nor the Court of Rome, shall ever be easy in our minds, until we are certain that the Directory are satisfied."*

It is scarcely to be conceived, that this conduct only seemed to increase the rage of the French government, and to accelerate the

* *Historical and Philosophical Memoirs of Pius VI.* &c. Vol. II. p. 331.

accomplishment of a project long since formed. It is perfectly clear, that, had the account given by Joseph Buonaparté himself, and by the servile scribes of the Directory, been as strictly true as it was grossly false, had the Directory formed no plan for the subversion of the papal government, for the subjugation of the Roman people, the unbounded submission here made, the unlimited satisfaction here offered, must have satisfied the Directory. The worthy representative of the Directory, with a baseness of soul, and a malignity of heart, peculiar to his family, spurned the proffered concessions of the Pope, and insulted the government, which he had conspired to destroy. "Crafty and rash," said this miserable upstart, in a letter to his masters from Florence, "in compassing criminal deeds, base and grovelling after they have been committed, it now lies prostrate at the feet of the Minister Azara, (the Spanish ambassador at Rome) entreating him to come to me at Florence, and bring me back to Rome." And the stupid biographer of the unhappy Pontiff, after quoting this passage from the letter of Joseph Buonaparté, observes, with unblushing impudence, "a government thus appreciated, could not hope to obtain pardon; and vengeance soon followed the crime which it had, at least, suffered to be perpetrated."

Nothing now remained but to perform the last act of the revolutionary tragedy. General Berthier, the supple tool of every regicide from Barras to Buonaparté, received orders to march to Rome, with an army of French and Cisalpine troops; they reached the neighbourhood of Rome very early in February. The Pope made one other attempt to deprecate the vengeance of the invaders. He sent Prince Belmonte, the Neapolitan Minister, to meet the French army, and to ascertain the intentions of its commander.* Berthier told him, that the only object of the Directory was to apprehend the persons accessary to the death of Duphot; and that the Pope might rest assured of the utmost security; that the Directory had expressly commanded him to respect the existing government, the Catholic religion, and all public as well as private property, and that he would not even

* The author of the Memoirs of Pius the VIth. already quoted, ridiculing the religious ceremonies at Rome, and discribing the state of the metropolis, after the departure of Joseph Buonaparté, observes---"While the Madounas shed tears in answer to the vows addressed to them, portraits of General Buonaparté were distributed among the people, with the inscription, "THIS IS THE TRUE LIKENESS OF THE HOLY SAVIOUR OF THE WORLD," Vol. II. p. 336. And this horrible blasphemy is stated, not only without censure, but with implied praise; it is related as an anecdote, classed under the head "*Efforts of Patriotism,*" opposed to "*the Mummeries of Superstition!!!*"

enter the city of Rome. In order to lull the suspicions of the Pope the better, or rather to render the infamous deception more complete, he committed these declarations to writing, and delivered them to the Neapolitan Minister;* demanding, in return, that the Pope should issue an edict to quiet the minds of the people, that no blood might be shed; and that nothing should be removed from the museums, the libraries, or the galleries,—asserting that, if these conditions were not complied with in the most unequivocal manner, he had orders to take possession of Rome, and of the Ecclesiastical State, by force.

"These very propositions would have sufficed to open the eyes of any other Prince, and to have dictated the necessity of the most vigorous means of defence to any other Council, than that to which modern Rome was, at this time, subjected. If the punishment of those who had been instrumental to the death of Duphot had, as this impudent valet of the Directory declared, been the only object which the French government had in view, however unjust it was, there could be no necessity to send an *army* to obtain it; as the Pope had expressly offered to make any satisfaction which

* Duppa's Brief Account, &c. p. 32.

the Directory might require. But, overlooking this fact of the mission of an army on such an errand, and admitting even the necessity of their presence for the accomplishment of the avowed object, (and if murder were to be committed, and the execution of the men who shot Duphot would have been murder, none were so well qualified for the purpose, as French Officers and French soldiers) what connection could the removal of the treasures of arts and science, which Rome contained, possibly have to do with the question. In short, Berthier spoke as plain as a thief on the road, who submits to the traveller the alternative of parting with his money or his life;—he clearly acknowledged his object; and distinctly told the papal government, that, if the people should presume to defend their laws, their liberty, or their property, or to deprive them of any portion of the fruits of their projected plunder, their lives should pay the forfeit of their temerity, and the city be delivered up to all the horrors of pillage, by a French army, exceeding, in atrocity of every kind, the worst effects of the unbridled rage of untutored barbarians. It was, in short, the manifesto of a leader of banditti, calculated less to deceive than to intimidate. The Pope, indeed, seems to have entertained strong suspicions of Berthier's sincerity, for he

dispatched some deputies to conclude with him some specific and definite terms of accommodation; but he refused to see them. The unhappy Pontiff then complied, obeyed the mandate of the military ruffian, and issued the prescribed edict, to forbid his subjects to resist their enemies and his own.

This last act of expiring authority appeared on the very day (Feb. 9th) on which the French, who had advanced by forced marches, fixed their camp on the Monte Maria, before one of the gates of the city. Not seeking to preserve even the appearance of consistency, Berthier, regardless of his recent declaration, the very next day summoned the Castle of St. Angelo to surrender. Having obtained easy possession of this fortress, he set all the convicts at liberty; then secured the gates of the city, and made prisoners of the Pope, the members of the government, and the whole population, without having experienced the slightest resistance.

Berthier immediately issued a proclamation, assuring the people, that their property should be sacred, that their persons should not be molested, and that the functions of the church should be *religiously respected.** There was not,

* Duppa's Brief Account, &c. p. 37. It is worthy of remark, that one of Berthier's first acts "was to suppress the

however, one public declaration, made by this man, which was not completely falsified by his conduct; and, indeed, many of his promises seem to have been made for the sole purpose of proving his utter contempt of shame and decency, as displayed in the constant violation of his voluntary engagements.

On the 15th Berthier made his triumphal entry into Rome, not as a brave conqueror, not as the harbinger of peace, but as the herald of destruction. The tree of liberty was, at the same time, planted in the ancient capitol, where the French commander repeated one of those Republican rhapsodies, which had been in use since the Revolution, and which every *patriot* knew by rote. A proclamation was also issued, declaring the Romans free and independent; announcing the destruction of the ancient

odious prerogative of *the right of asylum,* enjoyed by churches, and other privileged places;" (*See Historical and Political Memoirs of Pius the VI.* Vol. II. p. 344;) the pretended violation of which right was the alledged motive for the invasion of the country by the French.---But the true cause of this atrocious conduct was very frankly acknowledged by a French officer to the superior of a Dominican Convent.---" We were distressed," said he; " for money, and we were obliged to come; as for the death of Duphot, it would have been of no consequence, if there had not been other objects of greater importance in view."

Duppa's Brief Account, p. 79. *Note.*

government, (which Berthier had so recently protested the Directory had commanded him to *respect*,) and the erection of a *Roman Republic* on its ruins, founded on the *sovereignty of the people*, and "*under the special protection of the French army.*" To render this act more grating to the Pope, and to add insult to injury, the despicable coward, by whose command it was performed, caused the ceremony to take place on the anniversary of his election to the sovereignty.

To perfect the infamy of this revolutionary exhibition, in the very act of violating the laws both of God and of Man, the Republican General dictated the following invitation, issued by the *sovereign people* to their fellow-Citizens.—"The foundation of political liberty rests on the exact observance of religion and the law, on which, in a peculiar manner, depends the protection of a free people. In evidence of which truth, the sovereign people make it known, that to-morrow (Quinquagesima Sunday) will be sung a solemn mass at the altar of the tribune of the august temple of the Vatican, with the joyful voice of the *Te Deum.* Therefore, the devout and free Roman people are invited to attend, and thank, with sounds of joy, the most High, who is the supreme author

of religion, and of liberty."* This impious mockery of devotion, in which the deposed Cardinals were compelled to take a part, formed part of a plan for rendering Religion the handmaid to Injustice. With the same view, Priests were employed in the churches and squares to prove to the people that religion and democracy were inseparably connected; and lest the force of their arguments should not be felt, their incredulous audience were reminded that they were Christians, and that the implicit obedience yielded by the founder of their faith, to the higher powers, sufficiently marked the path which it was the duty of his followers to pursue; and, therefore, it was not only incumbent on them, as disciples of reason; but it was a religious obligation to submit to whatever form of government it had pleased *Providence* to set over them.† It escaped the notice of these accommodating sophists, that, even allowing the justice of their abstract argument, its applicability to the existing state of things in Rome might safely be denied.—

* This invitation was drawn up in the true form of the Robespierrean models; it was dated on the 17th of February, "*in the first year of the Roman Republic, one and indivisible.*" And, at the head of it, in large letters, appeared these words of ominous import, LIBERTY—EQUALITY.

† *Duppa's Brief Account*, p. 49.

For, instead of admitting that Providence had produced the revolution, it might, with much greater truth, be ascribed to the agents of the great enemy of the human race.

The Pope still remained at Rome, although every insult which the ingenuity of Republican malice could devise, was practised to provoke him to fly. Finding he would not go of his own accord, the French resolved to remove him; and, accordingly, he left the city on the morning of the 20th of February, under an escort of French cavalry, and in five days arrived at Siena. Thence he was removed, in the month of May, to a Carthusian convent in the neighbourhood of Florence. On the 27th of March, 1799, he was transferred to Parma; and was afterwards removed to France, where he finished his earthly career, the weak victim of unmerited persecution.

After his departure from Rome, his Palace of the Vatican was completely plundered of its furniture and effects. Indeed, the illustration of Berthier's system of *respect for property* immediately began; a systematic pillage followed, in which no article of luxury, no object of convenience, not even kitchen furniture, escaped the vigilant rapacity of the French Commisssaries appointed to superintend this work of destruction. The whole of the nobi-

lity and gentry were robbed of all which they possessed, moveable and immoveable; and, what added to the misery of the scene, as to the iniquity of the proceeding, was, that the rich were plundered without relieving the poor. The whole mass of plunder, the immense fruits of rapine, went to enrich a set of French cormorants, and were transmitted to a foreign country; churches, palaces, and houses, were rifled; pictures, statues, public monuments, and private collections, the noblest works of art, and the fairest productions of genius, all became a prey to these insatiate invaders, who were accompanied by a set of travelling brokers of their own country, prepared to purchase what the military or civil agents of their government chose to steal.* The extreme oppression exercised over the inhabitants in general, and the distresses of the poor, arising from the poverty of the rich, who had been

* These brokers were opulent individuals, in France, chiefly from Lyons and Marseilles, who, joining together, formed a considerable capital towards the support of the army of Italy, when Buonaparté first crossed the Alps; with the express condition, that they should have the refuse of the spoils of any conquests that might be made, at a certain per centage, for their own profit, upon a fair valuation, which valuation was also understood to be made by themselves.

Duppa's Brief Account, p. 59. *Note.*

thus stripped of every thing which they possessed, and who could, consequently, no longer afford to employ them, occasioned some partial commotions, as well at Rome, as at Velletri, Castello, and Albano, which were soon suppressed, and only supplied a pretext for additional acts of cruelty and oppression.

Upon the establishment of the Republic, seven Consuls were appointed to preside over it; and, as these were men chiefly raised from the lower part of the middle class of society, with little education, and violent passions, it is not surprising that they should prove very unfit for the exercise of supreme power,—or that they should fall into perpetual contradictions and absurdities, which rendered them objects of ridicule and contempt. While they preached humility to their fellow-citizens, they displayed the greatest pomp and pageantry themselves, in every respect. They were, however, mere instruments in the hands of the French, for enabling them to carry on their plunder and extortion with greater effect. When the Generals and Commissaries had glutted themselves with wealth, quarrelled about the division of the spoil, mutinied, and dispersed, they were succeeded by others, who exercised the same means of acquiring riches. Thus this system of rapine went on, until nothing more was to be

obtained, and artifice had exhausted every resource. The mask was then thrown aside, liberty was declared to be dangerous to the safety of the Republic, the constituted authorities to be incapable of managing the affairs of the State, and military law to be the only rational expedient for supplying their place. Thus, at once, the mockery of consular dignity was put an end to, the Senators (for a Senate had been appointed as well as Consuls) were sent home to take care of their families, and the tribunes were restored to their former occupations. The first operation which followed this change of system was the seizure of the whole annual revenue of every estate productive of more than ten thousand crowns; two-thirds of every estate that produced more than five thousand and less than ten; and one-half of every annual income of less amount.

In short, the blessed fruits of French domination cannot be better described than they have been by the panegyrist of their exploits, the biographer of the unfortunate Pius. He informs us that the two provinces of Bologna and Ferrara were seized by the French, to reimburse them the expences of their expedition. Enormous taxes were imposed on the principal Roman families, which, by producing

a material diminution of their expences, obliged them to dismiss their servants, and to leave them wholly without a provision,—caused articles of merchandise to remain unsold, and deprived workmen of their employment. Agriculture and industry were palsied. The French army, when it arrived at Tolentino, at first exacted a contribution of thirty-five millions; to which were added further requisitions of property, the produce of repeated pillage, the spoils of churches, the taxes imposed on the principal houses, &c. "And we do not in the least exaggerate," says this writer, "that there have been drawn from this country, so poor in appearance, nearly two hundred millions!"

Soon after the French had obtained possession of Rome, they established a Jacobin club, in the palace of the Duke d'Altemp, on the model of the original, or mother, society, for the purpose of instilling Jacobinical principles into the minds of the Roman youths, after eradicating every sentiment of religion and virtue from thence, and, from their hearts, every good and natural feeling. So rapid was the progress which these young men made, under such tuition, in the path of vice, that one of the members seriously recommended to his fellow-citizens, as a means of establishing the republic upon a

sure and permanent basis, to follow the precedent set by Carrier on the Loire, of sending away all the priests in vessels down the Tiber, and sinking them; and of putting to death all men, without discrimination, above sixty years of age, alledging, as a reason, that such men were known to be too strongly wedded to their prejudices to embrace a new mode of thinking; and hence they became not only useless consumers of provisions, of which there was not a sufficient supply for good and active citizens, but were, at best, tacit enemies of the revolution; and, that the latent and unavoidable influence of the ecclesiastics, in the education of the rising generation, would be obviously prejudicial to the growth of patriotic virtue and republican principles.

This atrocious proposal was, however, rejected and censured. But the expediency of getting rid of the priests was soon after taken into consideration by the French. An edict was, accordingly, issued for sending away all the foreign clergy, as well secular as regular, and to make the natives, who were suffered to remain, so far responsible for the peaceable conduct of the neighbourhood in which they lived, that, if any riot should take place, the priests, in the district, were to be immediately arrested,

and tried for their lives, as the supposed authors of the insurrection.*

It has been truly observed, that resistance of oppression is a virtue with the seditious

* It is a remarkable circumstance, that, while the Irish rebels, many of whose priests, were most active in the support of their cause, were soliciting the aid of French generals, and while they were charging the government with oppression for taking the only effectual means for the suppression of treasonable practices, and the punishment of traitors, a French commander promulgated the following law, to restrain the efforts of loyal priests, employed in defending the lawful government of their country, to which they owed allegiance, against domestic and foreign enemies.---"When, in a commune, there shall be any insurrection or armed mob, all the priests in that commune shall be arrested.

"Any priest who shall be accused of having excited disturbance or insurrection, or of having taken part in any such, shall be brought before the Council of War, and, if convicted, shall be condemned to death.

"The aforesaid priests, although they may not be convicted of having excited insurrection or riot, yet, if they cannot prove that they have exerted themselves to prevent such disturbance, by persuasion or instruction, they shall be retained in prison as hostages, at the discretion of the Commander in Chief.

"If, on the other hand, they can prove that they have exerted themselves with zeal, to prevent such tumult or insurrection, they shall be instantly set at liberty, and restored to their functions.

"General of Divison,

"JOUVION ST. CYR."

insurgents whom France arms against the laws of their country; but it becomes a crime when Frenchmen are its objects. Subjects who, from time immemorial, have obeyed a lawful government, have a right to revolt; but *republicans*, who have been regenerated by the revolutionary sabre, are conspirators and rebels, when they defend their customs, their religion, their wives, their conscience, and their property, against the soldiers of the French government. These maxims are extracted from the republican catechism of the French Directory, and from all the public writings in France, from 1789 to the present time.*

The rage for insurrection and change, which infected the Councils of the Luxembourg at this period, was such that they seemed determined to leave no government untouched, and to convince the whole world of the instability of those constitutions which they had proclaimed to be permanent, and of their inadequacy to answer the acknowledged purposes of their establishment. Having *re-revolutionized* Switzerland and Rome, and *re-revolutionized* the Cisalpine and Ligurian Republics, they now thought proper to try the same experiment upon the Batavian Republic. The chiefs of

* Mallet du Pan.

this *independent* State had changed the form of their government for one more conformable to that of France; had created five directors and a legislative body. But the French rulers, on the representation of the Dutch general, Daendels, overturned the new establishment, dismissed the Directors, reproved the legislature, and gave the people clearly to understand, that they must not attempt to legislate for themselves, but must be exclusively guided by the directions of the French government.

Having thus surrounded France with small republics, created by her hand, subject to her will, and dependent on her power; having seized the citadel of Turin, and reduced the King of Sardinia to the state of a prisoner in his own capital; and, having secured an easy road into Germany, by the conquest of Switzerland, the Directory turned their attention to the humiliation of England, the never-failing topic of their declamations, and the constant object of their thoughts. They were too wise, however, to carry their threat of invading England into execution; but resolved to appropriate the money which they had extorted, by way of loan, under that pretext, and the troops which they had collected, on their coasts, for that purpose, to a more distant expedition. They announced this project as one which would fill

all Europe with astonishment, and it was boastingly announced as being calculated to inflict a more severe blow upon Great Britain, than could be inflicted by an actual descent on her shores. Such was the light in which the French Directory chose to consider, or, at least, to represent, the memorable expedition to Egypt, which sailed from Toulon on the 20th of May, 1798. The fleet consisted of thirteen ships of the line, seven frigates, and several armed ships, making a total of forty-four sail, having, under their convoy nearly two hundred transports, with upwards of thirty thousand troops aboard,* a number of horses, a large train of artillery, and some hundreds of sçavans and artisans, of various descriptions. The way in which it was proposed to injure the English, by this expedition to Egypt, was to penetrate through that country, by the Red Sea, to the British territories in the East. In order to

* In the Annual Register for 1798, (p. 133) the number of French troops destined for Egypt is stated at "about twenty thousand." But, it appears, from the correct account given by Sir Robert Wilson, from official documents, that the whole of the French army in Egypt amounted to 32,180 men. *History of the British Expedition to Egypt*, &c. by Sir R. Wilson, p. 255. The false statement in the Annual Register has been literally repeated by Dr. Bisset, in his history of the present reign. Vol. VI. p. 218.

effect this purpose, Egypt was to be colonized, and a permanent settlement established there. This notable project had often been in contemplation of the French cabinet, but it was found to be attended with so many and such formidable difficulties, that, with every wish to humble their rivals, none of the French ministers had been found rash enough to undertake it. The papers relating to it were, however, preserved among the state documents of the monarchy, and had, with every thing else, fallen into the hands of the Republicans, when they seized the reins of government.

In order to secure a communication at all times with Egypt, and to have a place of retreat for their ships, if compelled to retreat, without being driven to the necessity of returning to their own ports, it was deemed of consequence to secure the island of Malta. It is true, the Maltese government was at peace with France; but so were the Swiss when they were attacked and subdued; such a consideration never weighed a straw with the Directory in the arrangement of their military plans, and their political projects. Malta was necessary for their purpose, and they were resolved to have it. They therefore set their usual instruments to work, and succeeded in seducing several of the French Knights from

their duty, and had, long since, by bribes and promises, secured such assistance as rendered their possession of this important island a matter of certainty. With these prospects before them, the French sailed from Toulon and arrived before the port of Malta, in the month of June. They begged permission to enter the harbour in order to procure water; and on receiving permission only for two ships at a time to enter, they had recourse to the miserable pretext of considering this as a refusal, which justified an attack on the place.—In short, in eight and forty hours, Malta, which, provided with the most ample means of defence, both by nature and art, could have stood a siege of many months, surrendered almost without firing a gun, and, after it had been possessed by the Knights for more than two centuries and a half, the French became complete masters of the island.

The first use which Buonaparté made of this important conquest, was to pillage the church, and to seize for himself all the valuable moveables which he could find; he then abolished the order; established a municipality, and a revolutionary provisional government; and, lastly, he pressed all the sailors he could find, and all the regular troops, and sent them on board his fleet. So well were all the measures taken for the success of this

work of perfidy and fraud, that some of the French Officers, speaking confidentially to certain knights of Malta, said,—"We knew better than you did yourselves, the extent of your means; we knew that you could not defend yourselves. It has happened at Malta, as it did in Switzerland, where we were; and perhaps you are not aware, that all *the conspirators had taken an oath to massacre you all, the moment the first bomb should be fired.*"* Having left an adequate garrison, under General Vaubois, to defend the island, Buonaparté sailed again on the 20th of June, and reached the Egyptian coast, the place of his destination, on the first of July.

The British government had watched with jealousy the military preparations on the French coast, and no sooner had the fleet sailed from Toulon, than a British squadron was prepared to pursue it. This squadron was intrusted to the command of Sir Horatio Nelson, now a rear-admiral, and was composed of thirteen sail of the line, and a fifty gun ship, all commanded by officers of known skill, and approved courage. In short, a squadron better equipped, in all

* Many interesting particulars of this treacherous scene will be found in a Letter from Leghorn, dated Aug. 15, 1798, inserted in the *Mercure Britannique*, of Mr. Mallet du Pan, Vol. I. p. 385.

respects, was never sent in pursuit of an enemy.

The English government, however, being uncertain of the destination of the French, the Admiral knew not how to shape his course with the greatest probability of overtaking them. He first sailed to Naples, and then to Sicily, and having there received information that the enemy had been seen at Malta, he hastened to that island in quest of them. Here he found that they had sailed some days before, but still he knew not whither; imagining, however, that Egypt was their object, he directed his course to Alexandria, but learnt that they had not been seen there. Mortified at his disappointment, and tired of conjecture, Nelson now sailed to Rhodes, where his inquiries were equally fruitless; passing by Candia, he again reached the Sicilian coast, and entered the bay of Syracuse, where he took in a fresh supply of wood and water. At length the officer sent in search of intelligence, learned, from a Turkish governor at Coran, that the French had been seen from Candia, a month before, steering towards Alexandria. To Egypt, accordingly, the British Admiral led his fleet; and on his arrival off the coast, he saw the harbour of Alexandria crowded with masts, and the French ships of war lying at anchor at a

short distance from the shore, in a regular line eastward from the point of Aboukir. They were protected by batteries erected for the purpose on the neighbouring shore, and on an island in their van; and by numerous gun-boats; and, besides, between them and the land were a number of shoals, which, in their apprehension, effectually secured them from attack on that side.

Nelson, however, who had a mind so particularly fertile in resources, that, in whatever situation an enemy presented himself, it instantaneously supplied him with an appropriate and adequate means of attack,—finding the French ships moored in the manner stated, resolved to run in between them and the shore, notwithstanding the batteries and the shoals, and to begin the attack on that side on which, not expecting an attack, they were the least prepared for resistance. This plan was, of course, hazardous; and, in the attempt to carry it into execution, the Culloden, a seventy-four, struck on a shoal, to the great mortification of her gallant commander and crew, by which misfortune, there remained but twelve sail of the line, and a fifty gun ship, to oppose to the thirteen sail of the enemy's line, which had, besides, a considerable advantage in the number

of guns, and weight of metal.* But the skill and gallantry of the British officers and men

* The English force consisted of the following ships:—1. Culloden, Captain Trowbridge, 74 guns, 590 men, (not in action;) 2. Theseus, Captain Miller, 74 guns, 590 men; 3. Alexander, Captain Ball, 74 guns, 590 men; 4. Vanguard, Rear-Admiral Nelson, Captain Berry, 74 guns, 595 men; 5. Minotaur, Captain Louis, 74 guns, 640 men; 6. Leander, Captain Thompson, 50 guns, 343 men; 7. Swiftsure, Captain Hallowell, 74 guns, 590 men; 8. Audacious, Captain Gould, 74 guns, 590 men; 9. Defence, Captain Peyton, 74 guns, 590 men; 10. Zealous, Captain Hood, 74 guns, 590 men; 11. Orion, Captain Saumarez, 74 guns, 590 men; 12. Goliah, Captain Foley, 74 guns 590 men; 13. Majestic, Captain Westcott, 74 guns, 590 men; 14. Bellerophon, Captain Darby, 74 guns, 590 men; and the Mutine Brig.—Omitting the Culloden, there were 938 guns and 7478 men employed in this action. To these were opposed the following ships:—1. Le Guerrier, 74 guns, 700 men; 2. Le Conquerant, 74 guns, 700 men; 3. Le Spartiate, 74 guns, 700 men; 4. L'Aquilon, 74 guns, 700 men; 5. Le Souverain Peuple, 74 guns, 700 men; 6. Le Franklin, Rear-Admiral Blanquet, 80 guns, 800 men; 7. L'Orient, Admiral Brueys, 120 guns, 1010 men; 8. Le Tonant, 80 guns, 800 men; 9. L'Heureux, 74 guns, 700 men; 10. Le Timoleon, 74 guns, 700 men; 11. Le Mercure, 74 guns, 700 men; 12. Le Guillaume Tell, 80 guns, 800; 13. Le Genereux, 74 guns, 700 men; and the Frigates La Diane, 48 guns, 300 men; La Justice, 44 guns, 300 men; L'Artemise, 36 guns, 250 men; La Seriouse, 36 guns, 250 men.—Thus it will appear, that the French had 1100 guns, and 10,810 men, engaged in this action, making a superiority over the English of 262 guns and 3382 men.

were not to have their efforts marred by obstacles much more formidable than those which here presented themselves. They darted into action with that spirit which characterizes the naval profession of their country, and with that confidence which is so necessary to ensure success, and which is not the least efficacious means for promoting it. The Goliah led the fleet, and passing between the van ship of the enemy and the land, took her station on the stern of the next to her; the other ships followed, in succession, until the Vanguard, which bore the Admiral's flag, took her station on the outside of the enemy's ships; and his example was followed by others, so that the enemy was placed between two fires, and their van and centre had a superior force opposed to them.

It fell to the lot of the Bellerophon to attack the French Admiral's ship; the contest was very unequal, as the former had only seventy-four guns and five hundred and ninety men, while her opponent carried one hundred and twenty guns, and one thousand and ten men, and her guns were, of course, of much heavier metal. But what was wanting in force was supplied in valour and skill. The Bellerophon engaged her till she took fire, and, about midnight, she blew up with a tremendous explo-

sion, which threw a light on all the surrounding objects, and displayed a scene at once magnificent and aweful. Till this time the battle had raged with unabated fury; and, though the superiority of the assailants had long been most evident, the French still defended themselves with determined resolution. Their efforts, however, proved unavailing; and, about three in the morning, the firing, which had been continued during the night, entirely ceased. Admiral Nelson had been wounded in the head, in an early part of the action, and obliged to be carried off the deck, but his absence was ably supplied by Capt. Berry, who, to use the Admiral's own words, "was fully equal to the important service going on." The anxious period between the cessation of all firing, and the break of day, being passed, the conquerors were able to ascertain, with precision, the effects of their heroic exertions. It was then found, that, of the enemy's fleet, only two ships of the line, the Guillaume Tell and Le Genereux, which were in the rear of the French line, and two frigates, La Diane and La Justice, were in a condition to effect their escape. The rest were either destroyed in the action, or were compelled to strike their colours to the victors. Of these, nine ships of the line, one of eighty, and eight of seventy-four guns, were taken;

and one of one hundred and twenty, and another of seventy-four, were burnt; one frigate also was burnt and one sunk. The English, in this brilliant action, had two hundred and eighteen killed, and six hundred and seventy-seven wounded.—Among the former were Captain Westcott of the Majestic, and three Lieutenants of the Bellerophon, the ship which so gallantly engaged the French Admiral.—And among the wounded were the British Admiral, the Captains of the Orion, Alexander, and Bellerophon, with several inferior officers. The French are supposed to have lost eight thousand men, besides their Commander in Chief, Admiral Brueys, an officer of ability and courage, and three of their Captains. Never was battle better fought;—never was victory more decisive. The shores, on the morning of the second of August, were lined with wondering natives, who had flocked to the coast, to witness a sight to them equally novel and tremendous. The impression which such a victory could not fail to make on their minds must have been most favourable to the English, and must have had a material influence on the subsequent operations in Egypt.

In the mean time, Buonaparté having, most fortunately for himself, reached Alexandria in safety, effected a landing, and might

have taken possession of the town without difficulty, or even resistance. But his object was to strike terror into the inhabitants, and he ever preferred slaughter to mercy; conquests dearly bought, to victories gained without bloodshed.—He, *accordingly, ordered the place to be stormed, and compelled the inhabitants* to fight in spite of themselves. *He lost about* three hundred men in the attempt, and, in revenge, suffered the town to be pillaged by his troops, who, for several hours, committed every species of cruelty and outrage upon the unoffending natives.

Before he landed, Buonaparté addressed two proclamations to the Pacha of Egypt, and the commander of the Caravans, informing them that his only object in coming thither was to punish the Beys, and the Mamelukes, who had cheated and oppressed the French merchants. He published also a curious appeal to the people of Egypt, whom he attempted to allure by promising them all the blessed fruits of French Liberty and Equality. He came, forsooth, good man, "to rescue the rights of the poor from the hands of their tyrants;" and, the French, devout people! "respected, more than the Mamelukes, God, *his Prophet*, and the *Koran*." Fearful, however, that the simple inhabitants of Egypt might either be un-

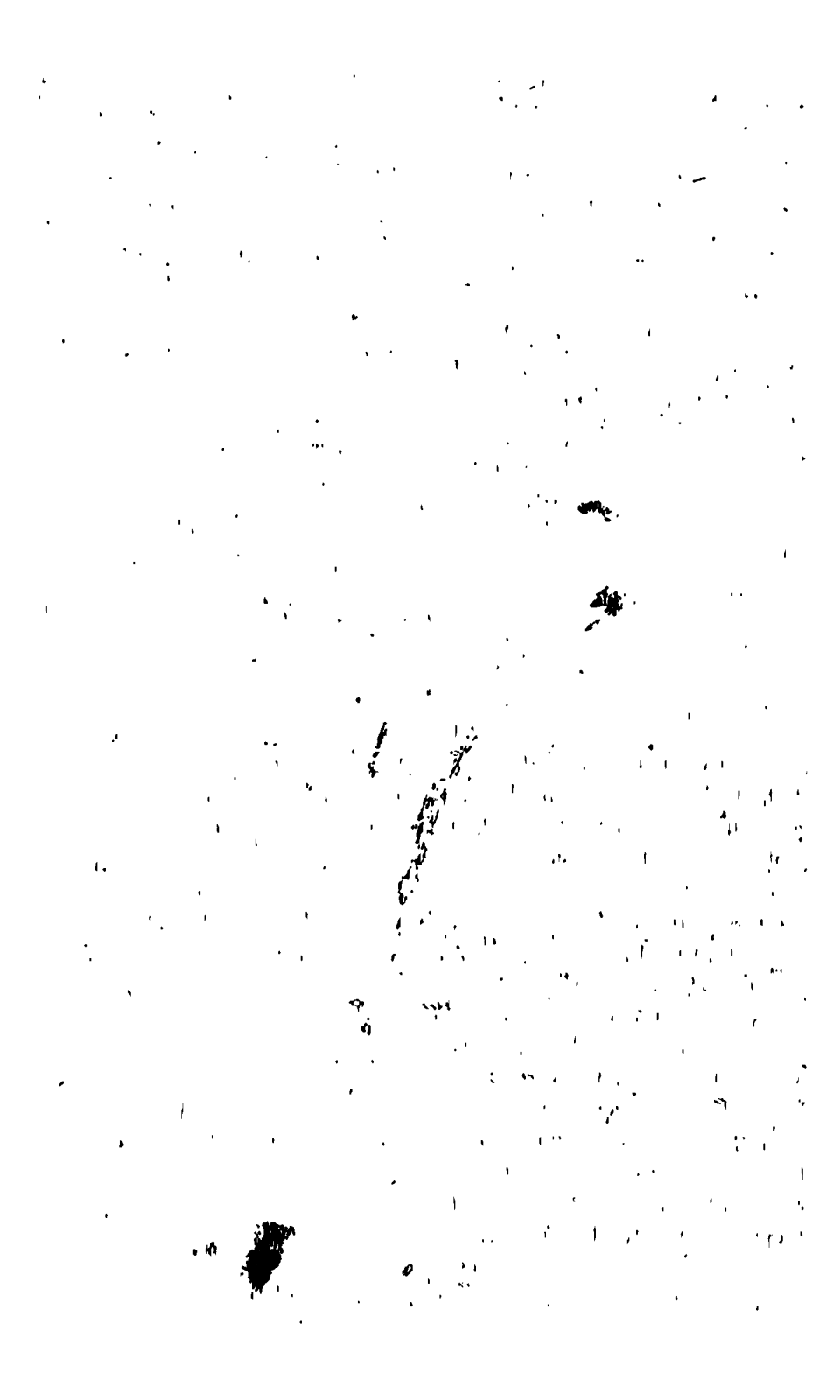
acquainted with his exploits, or disinclined to credit his assertions, he deemed it expedient to inform them that the French had destroyed the Pope, who judged it necessary to make war against the Mussulmans; and the Knights of Malta, because these foolish men thought that God wished war to be carried on against the Mussulmans; that they had been, at all times, the friends of the Grand Seignior, (whose wishes, he prayed God, he might accomplish!) and the foes of his foes. For these cogent reasons he called upon them to receive the French with open arms, and threatened to put every man to the sword who should dare to oppose them, and to reduce every village to ashes, the inhabitants of which should presume to defend themselves against the invaders of their territory.

Having provided for the security of Alexandria, in his absence, Buonaparté marched, on the seventh of July, towards Cairo. Murad Bey, at the head of his Mamelukes, harassed his army greatly on their march, and, though he could make no serious impression on it, killed numbers of the men. The Beys then retired towards Cairo, and, in the plain, on which stands the celebrated pyramids, resolved to dispute, with the French, the possession of that city. The action was fought on the

twenty-first of July; but the desperate bravery of the Mamelukes could not prevail against the disciplined courage and experience of European troops. The French were victorious; Murad Bey retired to Upper Egypt; and Cairo fell into the hands of the French, who immediately established a Municipality, and every other appendage of a revolutionary government.—They thus became, with little opposition, masters of Lower Egypt; but, at the same time, their fleet was destroyed, their transports were blocked up in the harbour of Alexandria, and their communication with Europe was entirely cut off.

The efforts of the British Ministers, at this period, were not confined to one particular object, but extended to every quarter, which presented a fair prospect of annoying the enemy. In the Spring of 1798, an expedition was fitted out, under the command of Sir Eyre Coote and Captain Popham, to blow up the sluices and gates on the Bruges Canal, near Ostend, for the purpose of destroying the internal navigation between Holland, Flanders, and France. This service was effectually performed, and with scarcely any loss. But, unfortunately, as the troops were preparing to embark, the wind became so strong, and the sea ran so high, that it was found impossible to reach the ships.

In a short time, a large body of French troops approached, and surrounding the English, reduced them after a most able and gallant defence, to the necessity of surrendering by capitulation.



APPENDIX A.

Manifesto of the British Government against France.

THE negotiation, which an anxious desire for the restoration of peace had induced his Majesty to open at Paris, having been abruptly terminated by the French government, the King thinks it due to himself, and to his people, to state, in this public manner, the circumstances which have preceded and attended a transaction of so much importance to the general interests of Europe.

It is well known, that, early in the present year, his Majesty, laying aside the consideration of many circumstances of difficulty and discouragement, determined to take such steps as were best calculated to open the way for negotiation, if any corresponding desire prevailed on the part of his enemies. He directed an overture to be made in his name, by his minister in Switzerland, for the purpose of ascertaining the dispositions of the French government with respect to peace. The answer which he received in return was at once haughty and evasive; it affected to question the sincerity of those disposi-

tions of which his Majesty's conduct afforded so unequivocal a proof; it raised groundless objections to the mode of negotiation proposed by his Majesty; (that of a general congress, by which peace has so often been restored to Europe,) but it studiously passed over in silence his Majesty's desire to learn what other mode would be preferred by France. It, at the same time, asserted a principle which was stated as an indispensable preliminary to all negotiation---a principle under which the terms of peace must have been regulated, not by the usual considerations of justice, policy, and reciprocal convenience; but by an implicit submission, on the part of all the powers, to a claim founded on the internal laws and separate constitution of France, as having full authority to supersede the treaties entered into by independent states, to govern their interests, to controul their engagements, and to dispose of their dominion.

A pretension in itself so extravagant, could, in no instance, have been admitted, or even listened to for a moment. Its application, to the present case, led to nothing less than that France should, as a preliminary to all discussion, retain nearly all her conquests, and those particularly in which his Majesty was most concerned, both from the ties of interest, and the sacred obligations of treaties: that she should, in like manner, recover back all that had been conquered from her in every part of the world; and that she should be left at liberty to bring forward such further demands on all other points of negotiation, as such unqualified submission on the part of those with whom she treated could not fail to produce.

On such grounds as these it was sufficiently evident, that no negotiation could be established: neither did the answer of his Majesty's enemies afford any opening for continuing the discussion, since the mode of negotiation, offered by his Majesty, had been peremptorily rejected by them, and no other had been stated in which they were willing to concur.

His Majesty was, however, not discouraged even by this

result, from still pursuing such measures as appeared to him most conducive to the end of peace; and the wishes of his ally, the Emperor, corresponding with those which his Majesty had manifested, sentiments of a similar tendency were expressed on the part of his Imperial Majesty, at the time of opening the campaign; but the continuance of the same spirit and principles, on the part of the enemy, rendered this fresh overture equally unsuccessful.

While the government of France thus persisted in obstructing every measure that could even open the way to negotiation, no endeavour was omitted to mislead the public opinion throughout all Europe, with respect to the real cause of the prolongation of the war, and to cast a doubt on those dispositions which could alone have dictated the steps taken by his Majesty and his august ally.

In order to deprive his enemies of all possibility of subterfuge or evasion, and in the hope that a just sense of the continued calamities of war, and of the increasing distresses of France herself, might, at length, have led to more just and pacific dispositions, his Majesty renewed in another form, and through the intervention of friendly powers, a proposal for opening negotiations for peace. The manner in which this intervention was received indicated the most hostile dispositions towards Great Britain, and, at the same time, afforded to all Europe a striking instance of that injurious and offensive conduct which is observed on the part of the French government towards all other countries. The repeated overtures made in his Majesty's name were, nevertheless, of such a nature, that it was at last found impossible to persist in the absolute rejection of them, without the direct and undiguised avowal of a determination to refuse to Europe all hope of the restoration of tranquillity. A channel was therefore, at length, indicated, through which the government of France professed itself willing to carry on a negotiation; and a readiness was expressed (though in terms far remote

from any spirit of conciliation) to receive a Minister authorized by his Majesty to proceed to Paris for that purpose.

Many circumstances might have been urged, as affording powerful motives against adopting this suggestion, until the government of France had given some indication of a spirit better calculated to promote the success of such a mission, and to meet these advances on the part of Great Britain. The King's desire, for the restoration of general peace, on just and honourable terms, his concern for the interests of his subjects, and his determination to leave to his enemies no pretext for imputing to him the consequences of their own ambition, induced him to overlook every such consideration, and to take a step which these reasons alone could justify.

The repeated endeavours of the French government, to defeat this mission in its outset, and to break off the intercourse thus opened, even before the first steps towards negotiation could be taken; the indecent and injurious language employed with a view to irritate the captious and frivolous objections raised for the purpose of obstructing the progress of the discussion; all these have sufficiently appeared from the official papers which passed on both sides, and which are known to all Europe.

But above all, the abrupt termination of the negotiation has afforded the most conclusive proof, that at no period of it was any real wish for peace entertained on the part of the French government.

After repeated evasion and delay, the government had at length consented to establish, as the basis of the negotiation, a principle proposed by his Majesty, liberal in its own nature, equitable towards his enemies, and calculated to provide for the interests of his allies, and of Europe. It had been agreed, that compensation should be made to France, by proportionable restitutions from his Majesty's conquests on that power, for those arrangements to which she should be called upon to consent, in order to satisfy the just pretensions of his allies, and to

preserve the political balance of Europe. At the desire of the French government itself, memorials were presented by his Majesty's Minister, which contained the outlines of the terms of peace, grounded on the basis so established, and in which his Majesty proposed to carry, to the utmost possible extent, the application of a principle so equitable with respect to France, and so liberal on his Majesty's part. The delivery of these papers was accompanied by a declaration expressly and repeatedly made, both verbally and in writing, that his Majesty's Minister was willing and prepared to enter, with a spirit of conciliation and fairness, into the discussion of the different points there contained, or into that of any other proposal or scheme of peace, which the French government might wish to substitute in its place.

In reply to this communication, he received a demand, in form the most offensive, and in substance the most extravagant, that ever was made in the course of any negotiation. It was peremptorily required of him, that, in the very outset of the business, when no answer had been given by the French government to his first proposal, when he had not even learnt, in any regular shape, the nature or extent of the objections to it, and much less received from that government any other offer or plan of peace, he should, in twenty-four hours, deliver in a statement of the final terms to which his court would, in any case, accede—a demand tending evidently to shut the door to all negotiation, to preclude all discussion, all explanation, all possibility of the amicable adjustment of points of difference; a demand in its nature preposterous, in its execution impracticable, since it is plain that no such ultimate resolution respecting a general plan of peace, ever can be rationally formed, much less declared, without knowing what points are principally objected to by the enemy, and what facilities he may be willing to offer in return for concession in those respects. Having declined compliance with this demand, and explained the reasons which rendered it inadmissible, but having, at the same

time, expressly renewed the declaration of his readiness to enter into the discussion of the proposal he had conveyed, or of any other which might be communicated to him, the King's Minister received no other answer than an abrupt command to quit Paris in forty-eight hours. If, in addition to such an insult, any further proof were necessary of the dispositions of those by whom it was offered, such proof would be abundantly supplied from the contents of the note in which this order was conveyed. The mode of negotiation, on which the French government had itself insisted, is there rejected, and no practicable means left open for treating with effect. The basis of negotiation, so recently established by mutual consent, is there disclaimed, and, in its room, a principle clearly inadmissible is re-asserted as the only ground on which France can consent to treat: the very same principle which had been brought forward in reply to his Majesty's first overtures from Switzerland, which had then been rejected by his Majesty, but which now appears never to have been, in fact, abandoned by the government of France, however inconsistent with that on which they had expressly agreed to treat.

It is therefore necessary that all Europe should understand, that the rupture of the negotiation at Paris does not arise from the failure of any sincere attempt on the part of France, to reconcile, by fair discussion, the views and interests of the contending powers. Such a discussion has been repeatedly invited, and even solicited, on the part of his Majesty, but has been, in the first instance, and absolutely, precluded by the act of the French government.

It arises exclusively from the determination of that government to reject all means of peace—a determination which appeared but too strongly in all the preliminary discussions; which was clearly manifested in the demand of an ultimatum made in the very outset of the negotiation, but which is proved beyond all possibility of doubt by the obstinate adherence to a claim which never can be admitted—a claim that the construc-

tion which that government affects to put (though, even in that respect, unsupported by the fact) on the internal constitution of its own country, shall be received by all other nations as paramount to every known principle of public law in Europe, as superior to the obligations of treaties, to the ties of common interest, to the most pressing and urgent considerations of general security.

On such grounds it is that the French government has abruptly terminated a negotiation, which it commenced with reluctance, and conducted with every inclination to prevent its final success. On these motives it is, that the further effusion of blood, the continued calamities of war, the interruptions of peaceable and friendly intercourse among mankind, the prolonged distresses of Europe, and the accumulated miseries of France itself are by the government of that country to be justified to the world.

His Majesty, who had entered into the negotiation with good faith, who has suffered no impediment to prevent his prosecuting it with earnestness and sincerity, has now only to lament its abrupt termination; and to renew, in the face of all Europe, the solemn declaration, that, whenever his enemies shall be disposed to enter on the work of a general pacification, in a spirit of conciliation and equity, nothing shall be wanting on his part to contribute to the accomplishment of that great object, with a view to which he has already offered such considerable sacrifices on his part, and which is now retarded only by the exorbitant pretensions of his enemies.

Westminster, 27th Dec. 1796.

APPENDIX B.

Protest of Earl Fitzwilliam, against the Address of the House of Lords, to the Throne, on his Majesty's Speech, announcing the opening of a Negotiation for Peace with the French Republic.

DISSENTIENT,

1st. Because, by this address, amended as it stands, the sanction of the Lords is given to a series of measures, as ill-judged, with regard to their object, as they are derogatory from the dignity of his Majesty's Crown, and from the honour of this kingdom. The reiteration of solicitations for peace to a species of power, with whose very existence all fair and equitable accommodation is incompatible, can have no other effect than that which it is notorious all our solicitation have hitherto had. They must increase the arrogance and ferocity of the common enemy of all nations; they must fortify the credit, and fix the authority of an odious government over an enslaved people; they must impair the confidence of all other powers in the magnanimity, constancy, and fidelity, of the British Councils; and it is much to be apprehended it will inevitably tend to break the spring of that energy, and to lower that spirit which has characterised, in former times, this high-minded nation; and which, far from sinking under misfortune,

has even risen with the difficulties and dangers in which our country has been involved.

2d. Because no peace, such as may be capable of recruiting the strength, œconomising the means, augmenting the resources, and providing for the safety of this kingdom; and its inseparable connections, and dependencies, can be had with the usurped power now exercising authority in France, considering the description, the character, and the conduct, of those who compose that government; the methods by which they have obtained their power, the policy by which they hold it, and the maxims they have adopted, openly professed, and uniformly acted on, towards the destruction of all governments not formed on their model, and subservient to their domination.

3d. Because the idea that this kingdom is competent to defend itself, its laws, liberties, and religion, under the general subjugation of all Europe, is presumptuous in the extreme, contradictory to the supposed motives for our present eager solicitations for peace, and is certainly contrary to the standing policy both of state and commerce, by which Great Britain has hitherto flourished.

4th. Because, while the common enemy exercises his power over the several states of Europe in the way we have seen, it is impossible long to preserve our trade, or, what cannot exist without it, our naval power. This hostile system seizes on the keys of the dominions of these powers, without any consideration of their friendship, their enmity, or their neutrality; prescribes laws to them as to conquered provinces; mulcts and fines them at pleasure; forces them, without any particular quarrel, into direct hostility with this kingdom, and expels us from such ports and markets as she thinks fit; insomuch that, Europe remaining under its present slavery, there is no harbour which we can enter without her permission, either in a commercial or a naval character. This general interdict cannot be begged off; we must resist it by our power, or we are already in a state of vassalage.

5th. Because, whilst this usurped power shall continue thus constituted, and thus disposed, no security whatever can be hoped for in our colonies and plantations, those invaluable sources of our national wealth, and our naval power. This war has shewn that the power prevalent in France, by intentionally disorganizing the plantation system, which France had in common with all other European nations; and, by inverting the order and relations therein established, has been able, with a naval force, altogether contemptible, and with very inconsiderable succours from Europe, to baffle, in a great measure, the most powerful armament ever sent from this country into the West Indies, and at an expence hitherto unparalleled; and has, by the force of example, and by the effects of her machinations, produced, at little or no expence to herself, either of blood or treasure, universal desolation and ruin, by the general destruction of every thing valuable and necessary for cultivation, throughout several of our islands, lately among the most flourishing and productive. The new system, by which these things have been effected, leaves our colonies equally endangered in peace as in war. It is, therefore, with this general system, of which the West India scheme is but a ramification, that all ancient establishments are essentially at war for the sake of self-preservation.

6th. Because it has been declared from the Throne, and, in effect, the principle has been adopted by Parliament, that there was no way likely to obtain a peace, commonly safe and honourable, but through the ancient and legitimate government long established in France. That government, in its lawful succession, has been solemnly recognized, and assistance and protection as solemnly promised to those Frenchmen who should exert themselves in its restoration. The political principle upon which this recognition was made, is very far from being weakened by the conduct of the newly-invented government. Nor are our obligations of good faith pledged on such strong motives of policy to those who have been found in their

allegiance dissolved, nor can they be so, until fairly-directed efforts have been made to secure this great fundamental point. None have yet been employed with the smallest degree of vigour and perseverance.

7th. Because the example of the great change made by the usurpation in the moral and political world, more dangerous than all her conquests, is, by the present procedure confirmed in all its force. It is the first successful example furnished by history of the subversion of the ancient government of a great country, and of all its laws, orders, and religion, by the corruption of mercenary armies, and by the seduction of a multitude bribed by confiscation to sedition, in defiance of the sense, and to the entire destruction of almost the whole proprietary body of the nation. The fatal effects of this example must be felt in every country. New means, new arms, new pretexts, are furnished to ambition; and new persons are intoxicated with that poison.

8th. Because our eagerness in suing for peace may induce the persons exercising power in France erroneously to believe, that we act from necessity, and are unable to continue the war; a persuasion which, in the event of an actual peace, will operate as a temptation to them to renew that conduct which brought on the present war, neither shall we have any of the usual securities in peace. In their treaties, they do not acknowledge the obligation of that law, which, for ages, has been common to all Europe. They have not the same sentiments, nor the same ideas, of their interest in the conservation of peace, which have, hitherto, influenced all regular governments; they do not, in the same manner, feel public distress, or the private misery of their subjects; they will not find the same difficulty, on the commencement of a new war, to call their whole force into sudden action, where, by the law, every citizen is a soldier, and the person, and properties, of all are liable, at once, to arbitrary requisitions. On the other hand, no attempt has been made to shew in what manner, whether

by alliances, by force, military or naval, or by the improvement and augmentation of our finances, we shall be better able to resist their hostile attempts, after the peace, than at the present hour. If we remain armed, we cannot reap the ordinary advantage of peace in œconomy; if we disarm, we shall be subject to be driven into a new war, under every circumstance of disadvantage, unless we now prepare ourselves to suffer, with patience and submission, whatever insults, indignities, and injuries, we may receive from that insolent, domineering, and unjust power.

9th. Because the inability of humbling ourselves again to solicit peace, in a manner which is a recognition of the French republic, contrary to all the principles of war, the danger of peace if obtained, the improbability of its duration, and the perseverance of the enemy throughout the interval of peace in their mischievous system, is not conjecture, but certainty. It has been avowed by the actual governors of France, at the very moment when they had before them our application for a passport, They chose that moment for publishing a State Paper, breathing the most hostile mind. In it they stimulate, and goad us by language the most opprobrious and offensive. They frankly tell us, that it is not our interest to desire peace, for that they regard peace only as the opportunity of preparing fresh means for the annihilation of our naval power. By making peace they do not conceal that it will be their object—" to wrest from us our maritime preponderancy; to re-establish what they invidiously call the freedom of the seas; to give a new impulse to the Spanish, Dutch, and French, marines; and to carry to the highest degree of prosperity the industry and commerce of those nations," which they state to be our rivals;—which they charge us with " unjustly attacking, when we can no longer dupe;" and which they throughout contemplate as their own dependencies, united in arms, and furnishing resources for our future humiliation and destruction. They resort to that well-known and

constant allusion of their's to ancient history, by which, representing "France as modern Rome, and England as modern Carthage," they accuse us of national perfidy, and hold England up as an object to be blotted out from the face of the earth. They falsely assert that the English nation supports, with impatience, the continuance of the war; and has extorted all his Majesty's overtures for peace "by complaints and reproaches;" and above all, not only in that passage, but, throughout their official note, they shew the most marked adherence to that insidious and intolerable policy of their system, by which they, from the commencement of the revolution, sought to trouble and subvert all the governments in Europe. They studiously disjoin the English nation from its Sovereign.

10th. Because, having acted, throughout the course of this awful and momentous crisis, upon the principles herein expressed; and after having, on the present occasion, not only fully reconsidered, and jealousy examined their soundness and validity, but gravely attended to, and scrupulously weighed the merits of all those arguments which have been offered to induce a dereliction of them, conscientiously adhering to, and firmly abiding by them, I thus solemnly record them, in justification of my own conduct, and in discharge of the duty I owe to my King, my Country, and general interest of civil Society.

WENTWORTH FITZWILLIAM.

APPENDIX C.

THOUGH a reference to the files of the Morning Chronicle, from the first dawn of the French revolution, to the day of this debate, would sufficiently justify this remark; yet it may not be wholly useless to exhibit a few proofs of its justice.—The Duke of Bedford, it has been seen, insisted on the *uniformity of its language* and conduct, during the period in question. Two or three extracts will suffice to prove the *correctness* of his Grace's assertion. "In the dreadful scheme of requisition, which Mr. "Pitt has resolved on, and which our representatives so cor- "dially abet, no time is to be given for remonstrance. Our "readers will see that it is to be hurried on with a degree of "haste, almost unparalleled in the history of Finance. By "the impediments which are flung in the way of meetings, "IT IS UTTERLY IMPOSSIBLE *for the people to meet and* "*express their sentiments*, in any way that can avail them on "the occasion. If there was a single man in the country, "who, in his heart, thought, that the PITT and GRENVILLE "BILLS were constitutional measures; THIS PROOF of *their* "*operation*, we think, will correct his error." *Morning Chronicle, Thursday, Dec. 7, 1797.*

" It is proper the people should know, that they are NOT " PREVENTED by the PITT and GRENVILLE BILLS from meeting " *in the Old English constitutional manner*, and to take " into consideration the grievous nature, and alarming tendency, of the double, treble, and quadruple assessment with " which they are threatened." *Morning Chronicle, Monday, Dec.* 11, 1797.

" The rich *will not be affected* by the assessed taxes— " even should they be more than trebled, they would not be " scratched by them." M. C. Dec. 2.

" The style of living, which our pride and vanity, our " love of fashion, &c. has introduced, must now *yield to the* " *imperious law of necessity*." M. C. Dec. 2.

" It *exempts* the absolutely poor, and those who are so in " the next degree." M. C. Dec. 2.

" It is ridiculous to say, that the tax will not fall with the " most merciless severity on the poor." M. C. Dec. 11.

" We *recommend* non-consumption agreements."

" *We are afraid* non-consumption agreements will become " common." M. C. Dec. 12.

" Non-consumption agreements will be *impracticable* " during the present year, &c." M. C. Dec. 11.

If his Grace could descry *uniformity* in such language and conduct as this, (and many other instances of a similar nature might be adduced) he must have had not merely the faith which removes mountains, but the spirit which reconciles contradictions.

The Earl of Derby, it has been seen, asserted, that the Morning Chronicle was never employed to undermine *the religious* and civil establishments of the country, and that it was distinguished for *its regard to the decencies of private life*, and by its disdain of all scandal on individuals, &c. It will not be denied, that constant attempts to render religion itself an object of contempt and derision have a direct and necessary tendency to undermine every *religious* establishment. As to

its attacks on the *political* establishments, it would be an endless task to quote, or even to refer to, them. If, however, the Earl of Derby will turn over the pages of "the spirit of the Public Journals for 1797," and read a dialogue, entitled, "*The Alarmists*," and an Address, "*To all the British dealers in blood and slaughter, who are under the rank of ensign*," he will find ample grounds for retracting this hasty and inconsiderate assertion. And, in the same collection, which is stocked wtih numerous extracts from the Morning Chronicle, his Lordship will see an Essay, called, "*The Cries of Bacchus*," in which the miracles of the holy founder of the christian faith are compared with those of the Pagan Deity!

When a solemn thanksgiving was ordered at St. Paul's, by our pious Sovereign, for the success of his arms, the Morning Chronicle was the first to ridicule this act of national devotion.

"It is probable that the French will have a thanksgiving "for their successes, on the same day as we have our's; they "will beat us, however, for they have Robespierre's solemn "thanksgiving for a model." Morn. Chron. Dec. 18, 1797. It must be remembered, that the Pagan Farce, which the Morning Chronicle here recommends to the imitation of Englishmen, was devised by the atheistical philosophers of revolutionary France, and the principal part in it performed by a naked prostitute, who personated the *Goddess of Reason*; while GOBET, the constitutional Bishop of Paris, attended by his Clergy, made a formal abjuration of the christian faith and worship; craving mercy of the *nation* "for having so long "deceived them with the absurdities of the *Impostor* CHRIST, "and his *pretended* FATHER, whose doctrines he now abjured "with detestation and horror," promising thenceforth to acknowledge no other Deity than REASON.

On the 21st of December, the same paper ridiculed religion in the person of Mr. Wilberforce, who had recently published a book on the subject.

"Mr. Wilberforce would have been an admirable coadjutor to Oliver Cromwell, whose seeking the Lord was of

" as much benefit to the country as Mr. Wilberforce's looking " into Jesus."

Well might a contemporary writer, adverting to this paragraph, and others of a similar nature, say to the people of England, " are they content to exchange rational liberty for anarchy, and the religion of their forefathers for atheism in its most horrid form? If so, they will do well to attend to these zealots of infidelity—these faithful copyists of the *Pere du Chesne;* they are the mouth pieces of *the party,* and they speak to us in thunder."

But, to have written a book in favour of religion was a crime which the writers in this paper could neither forgive nor forget, it seems, for it made that gentleman the constant pretext for their attacks on religion

In the Morning Chronicle of January 8, (1798) after calling " Church and King" a *scarecrow,* the same writer observes, " Mr. Wilberforce was yesterday the most conspicuous figure " in Hyde Park; the animal that bore him proceeded *with a* " *stately and solemn pace,* as if conscious of being bestrode by " a GODLY man." Again, in the same paper—" the esteem " in which Mr. Wilberforce holds the cross of Christ, and the " Treasury Bench, cannot be expressed in terms of sufficient " admiration." And, returning to the charge three days after, (January 11th) this writer observes, " a correspondent " cautions us against making a profane use of Mr. WILBER- " FORCE's appearance on Sunday: that gentleman would not " have been so UNGODLY *as to gallop there* without a sufficient " reason. It was the fulfillment of some prophecy; and " the horse he rode might be related to the White Horse " of the Revelations."

I must content myself with a mere reference to further specimens of this impious trash, to be found in the Morning Chronicle of the 16th, 18th, and 19th of January; and of the 10th and 20th of February, 1798. Here I shall again

use the words of that admirable writer, whose just sentiments, on this subject I have already quoted.

"We entreat our readers to pause a moment in this place. They have seen a print, calling itself the *mouth-piece* of the PARTY, and, undoubtedly, speaking its sentiments;—after persisting, for years, in extenuating our successes, aggravating our misfortunes, and insulting our necessities; after reviling the whole system of our domestic economy, pouring every species of abuse on the mild and equitable distribution of justice here, and lavishing the most enthusiastic encomiums on the lawless and blood-stained tribunals of France,—they have seen it, we say, after all this, as if fearful that its detestable attempts might prove inadequate to the production of the great work of insurrection and murder, calling in the aid of ATHEISM, reviling the "*cross of Christ*," and levelling its ridicule at the CREATOR, through the sides of a man who has no other claim to its abuse, than having written a book on the subject of religion." Yes, and we have seen peers of the realm, sitting in their judicial capacity, vouching for the soundness of its principles, and the purity of its conduct;—we have seen men, whose word is equivalent to the oath of less dignified christians, assert that it contained nothing "to undermine either the civil or the religious establishments of the country!"

One word or two on its alleged "regard to the decencies of private life; its disdain of all scandal on individuals, and of licentious personalities." In order to deter the women of Great Britain from contributing to the support of the country, at this most critical period of its history, the Morning Chronicle attacked, with the most malevolent indecency, a most respectable lady, who resided in the vicinity of the capital, for no other reason than that she was reported to have added her mite to the voluntary contributions at the

Bank,

" The alarm among the fair sex happily subsides. It " arose from the mistake of an elderly lady, who read, in a " newspaper, that the French had ravished (ravaged) all " Europe." Morning Chronicle, January 29, 1798.

" The prostitutes of Jermyn Street have agreed to sub- " scribe *six nights* to the cause of *religion*, because the *end*, " as Mr. WILBERFORCE says, *sanctifies the means*." *Morning* " *Chronicle, February 20th.*

The patriotic lady, who had given such mortal offence to this Jacobin scribbler, was more pointedly attacked in various paragraphs, but, fortunately, without producing the desired effect. The only object, in extracting the few passages which have been quoted from the paper in question, is to shew what kind of *new* spirit had lately risen in the country, which Mr. had to encounter at this period; and farther, to demonstrate excess to which the zeal, displayed by the leaders of the , was carried; subduing alike all sense of public duty, egard for truth, and all emotions of shame. Enough been exhibited for this purpose, and the subject shall be ssed in the words of a writer, who had viewed the licen- productions of the party with a more steady eye, a more t judgment, and a more impartial mind, than were pos- by the noble persons whose notions of decency, pro- , consistency, and soundness of religious and political iples, have been here examined;—and who, in a solemn l to the people of England, on the danger of encouraging irculation of such prints, briefly and aptly characterized ll, but more particularly that paper, which the leaders party in the House of Lords selected as the theme of anegyric.

ARE THEY HUSBANDS?—Chastity is continually treated se papers with contempt or ridicule. ARE THEY ERS?—Youthful modesty is put to the blush by gross does, or downright indecencies, in every column. ARE Y CHRISTIANS?—Blasphemy is an abominable theme of

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